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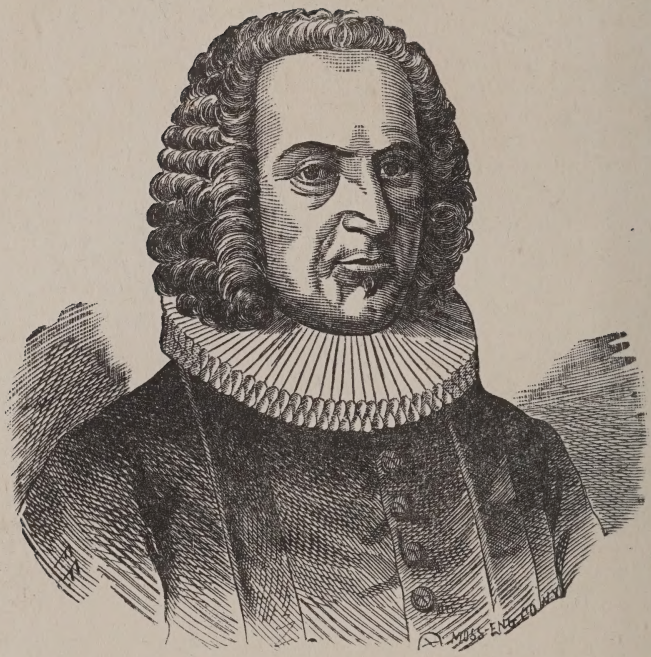

HANS EGEDE

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Hans Egede and the Greenlanders

By

ERLING NICOLAI ROLFSRUD

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AUGUSTANA BOOK CONCERN
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS

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TO MY WIFE

GERTRUDE EGEDE

Chapter 1

THE SHIP WAS pinioned fast—as surely as though the pack ice had already heaved against its sides and shackled the vessel in slow, relentless grasp. The wide lane of open water through which the *Hope* had sailed was now narrowed to a few rods of choppy waves still free of ice.

Standing alone in the bow, was a man in the black garb of a pastor. His blond beard was cut short in the simple style of one who took little thought of personal adornment. Of medium height and husky build, there was sensitivity limned in the fair-complexioned, longish face. The blue eyes strained toward the murky outline of snow-cloaked mountains huddled a few miles ahead.

And the heart of Hans Egede[1] quaked with sudden fear. For what the captain had said was true: stretched before the ship was a floor of ice upon the ocean bed, an impenetrable sheath thrust out from the glacier-covered shore. After days of searching for a landing place, it was still impossible to reach the Greenland coast.

The Green Land, the old Sagas called it, the home of Eric the Red and of Leif the Lucky and their followers, who had settled there in large numbers, only to vanish

[1] Pronounced ĕg-ĕ-dĕ

centuries later and be remembered only in the Sagas told in the homeland.

Hans looked back at the companion ship. It rocked upon the waters, its hull bruised where a small iceberg had collided against it. Retreat was impossible. Ice floes in steady, stubborn pace had closed off the lane.

A sailor slithering down a mast near Hans, snarled curses and cried out, "You! You are the one that brought us into this hell of ice and wind! You ought to die for bringing innocent people here on this fool's errand!"

Hans made no reply. How often he had been told that his mission call was a fool's errand—and it had availed little to answer the ridicule that had pelted him these years! But he was glad when the angry man joined his fellows below deck.

Quickly now, the sky darkened, and rain hurtled down, driving, furious rain, not like that which fell gently upon the mountains and pleasant fjords in Norway. Hans drew his cloak more securely about him, feeling no desire to go down where there was the railing and scoffing and hatred of those who were with him upon this fool's errand —"this fool's errand" for which he had endured hardship and enmity and derision for thirteen years.

Long years of battling with his own soul. Of quelling his own misgivings. Of struggling to win the help of men who branded him as insane, a wild dreamer, an improvident preacher who would expose his own family to danger and sure death.

Hans turned his back upon the bitter blast of wind. Yes, the scoffers in Nordland, in Bergen, in Denmark—they had promised him that only death waited, not Norwegians fallen into heathendom, in the land of Eric the Red.

Were they right? And could these two ships ever escape the enmeshing flotilla of grinding ice?

He stared up toward the brackish heavens, and phrases that he had long loved echoed down the lonely corridors of his heart.

"They that go down to the sea in ships . . . that do business in great waters." Even in great waters like these, filled with churning chunks of ice. *"These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof."* God was here, too. Just as He was back home in Norway with the fishermen in Lofoten waters. *"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses."*

Truly it had been the Lord's will that had brought him away from his comfortable parish at Vaagen to bring the gospel to the lost Norsemen in Greenland; the Lord would not forget the needs of His servant!

Hans saw the captain, his eyes pallid with fright. Saw him turn at the sound of footsteps coming up the deck stairs and heard his stern voice, "You are forbidden to come on deck in this storm, Fru Egede! Go back! Get yourself and your children ready for death. It will not be long before death will take us all!"

"It is not so," Hans heard his wife reply. "The Lord would not bring us here—only to kill us."

"It cannot be otherwise. We can never get out of here alive. Now go back." The captain started down the steps after her.

Through the noise of wind and furled sails flapping, Hans heard his Gertrude's continued calm.

"We must have faith, captain."

"Faith?" There was not derision, but a hopelessness in the answer. "Faith no bigger than a mustard seed is sup-

posed to move mountains. Would that your faith would remove this ice!"

"The Lord God will remove the ice. He is Almighty. You will see, Captain!"

Beloved Gertrude! Had it not been for her trust in his call, he might still have been ministering to the fisherfolk at Vaagen. They had been so happy there, he and Gertrude. Great had been their rejoicing over the little Paul, firstborn of their four—it seemed the sturdy walls of the Lofoten parsonage would fairly burst from their contentment! He had an abiding faith in his Lord, the confidence of his parishioners. What more could a pastor desire?

Then, like a thief to steal from him all his contentment, came the call.

He doubted it himself, at first. Gertrude wept in dismay when she first learned of it. Vociferously, their relatives and friends opposed the idea of a mission call to Greenland. Finally, Hans gave it up, convinced that Gertrude was right when she insisted that God never asked the impossible of any man.

And what could be more nearly impossible than for a family man to go to a frigid land such as Greenland, to preach the gospel to Norwegians from whom no word had come for more than three hundred years?

But the call persisted. There was no longer peace in his heart, and he wrote in his diary, "It is as though my soul would tear me asunder with this anguish and indecision! I cannot rest while my countrymen in Greenland must live without the gospel. I must go to them; I must plant the cross once more in Greenland."

So again he wrote to the bishops at Trondhjem and Bergen. Again he wrote to the king of the United Kingdom of Norway and Denmark. Again he wrote to the

Mission College at Kjobenhavn.[1] To all he made the plea that Christianity be restored to the Norwegians who had by now surely fallen into the heathen ways of their barbaric "Skrelling" neighbors.

And Gertrude wailed and lamented that she had ever married a man who could be so callous of the welfare of his wife and family.

For Hans, this accusation cut deeply. Yet the call endured through all his heartache. He persuaded his wife to pray that the Lord make His will known clearly to her. And glorious for him was the day when Gertrude Egede rose from her knees, a new light in her eyes and the burden of opposition toward her husband's call lifted from her heart.

Now like Sarah, she would follow her Abraham wherever the Lord might lead—even into Greenland.

From the bishops, Hans received only brief and polite commendation for his concern over the spiritual welfare of the Greenland Vikings. But this was no time, they pointed out, for launching a new mission, especially in a country about which there was more fable than truth. Furthermore, there could be no new mission posts until Norway and Denmark were at peace with Sweden.

Meanwhile, Hans' parishioners became more and more resentful of this pastor who wanted to leave them. Some told him his ravings about a Greenland mission were signs of a weak mind, of tottering intellect. Slander and backbiting followed. A few accused him of wanting to establish the Mission, not for the sake of the gospel, but to bring himself fame.

Now as he stood peering into the fallen darkness, he searched his conscience and knew with certainty that he had not brought himself and his family and the forty

[1] Copenhagen, Denmark

other people aboard the ship to face danger because he had personal ambitions. No, he was here on the deck of the ice-surrounded *Hope* because his call had been of the Lord.

"And he bringeth them out of their distresses."

There was no need for him to go below deck to comfort Gertrude and the children. Gertrude did not need comforting. No, he would stay here, and watch with the mate over yonder, watch to see how the Lord would bring them out of this distress!

The ice floes growled as they ground closer together, but Hans found himself thinking again of Vaagen. The flowers had been blue in blossom upon the sod roofs of the village when he preached his farewell sermon there in July, 1718. To Bergen, he and Gertrude and the little ones had then gone—to find even more bitter opposition to the mission cause that lay more and more upon their own hearts. Three years of begging and pleading with Bergen men followed. But the seafaring merchants of the city only laughed him in derision when he implored them to reopen a trade with Greenland that had been profitable for Bergen merchants of four and five centuries earlier.

He had better do his preaching elsewhere, they told him. What sort of idiots did he think they were, that he believed he could interest them in such a ridiculous venture—just so that he could establish a mission to people who did not even exist? Had he not heard that the Vikings had been exterminated from the land of the "Skrellings"? If, indeed, Eric's followers were still living in Greenland, wouldn't they have enough Norwegian gumption to get them back to Norway if they wished?

And so Hans had gone to Denmark to stand before the King in Kjobenhavn and plead his cause. While the

pious monarch listened with sincere interest, yet no royal provisions were made for an expedition to Greenland. Nor had the Mission College, after years of written appeal from this preacher without a pulpit, been convinced of the feasibility of his plan.

Hans Egede's mission, it had become!

Home to Bergen he went, the laughingstock of the townspeople, a source of embarrassment to Gertrude's relatives there. Only Gertrude was his staunch ally.

"The Lord will provide, Hans. Just as surely as this is a call from Him, He will also give you the means. Perhaps, Hans, you have leaned too much upon your own understanding. Perhaps it has become too much—*Hans'* mission!"

Yes, it was true. In his fervor, he had forgotten that this was not a burden to carry alone, there was One Who shared. Hans Egede was only a servant who obeyed the will of his Lord, only a steward in the Master's vineyard.

Even while the prospects were darkest for the fulfillment of his call, Hans felt the yoke of his concern lifted, as he laid his cares more completely than ever at the feet of his Lord.

And then, like a miracle, the doors opened. Late in 1720, under the leadership of men of strong Christian convictions, the Bergen merchants organized for trade in Greenland waters. Simultaneously, there came a message from King Frederick appointing Hans Egede as missionary to Greenland, the king himself promising financial support. Not only this, but the Mission College was also persuaded to give help to the new mission.

With jubilant hearts, Hans and Gertrude prepared for departure. The dream of thirteen years was now to see fulfillment!

On May 3, 1721, the *Hope* left Bergen. With it sailed

a smaller vessel which was to return to report on the establishment of the new colony in Greenland, while the *Hope* would remain there through the winter.

Six weeks later, after furious storms on the Atlantic, after desperate attempts to find some way to penetrate the waters gorged with icebergs and pack ice along the east coast of Greenland, both ships were now imprisoned.

Hans often squared his sagging shoulders as the clouded hours passed and a windstorm lashed the two small vessels. At midnight, the skies began to clear. The wind calmed to a whisper among the spars and masts. And at last the Midnight Sun sent long slanting fingers to shear the clouds.

He could see again the jagged ice-capped peaks of Greenland, gleaming in the new light. Out upon the sea the shifting wind, blowing now from the north, urged the ice floes to scatter out toward the ocean. Slowly a course out back to the open sea was being cleared! He heard the joyful shouts of the sailors unfurling the sails, and his heart beat high with a magnificat of praise:

"Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them into their desired haven."

Chapter 2

FOR EIGHT DAYS, the two ships searched along the saw-toothed, ice-infested coast for a likely harbor. At length, they reached the southern end of Greenland, started northward up the west coast, relieved to find that here the waters were not as congested with ice. The weather, also, was far more moderate.

Encouraged, Hans and the captain decided that the ships should continue northward to a latitude frequented by Dutch whaling vessels, and a latitude believed to be the approximate location of the Western Settlement of the Vikings.

Always, a fierce patriotism had burned in Hans' heart. As a boy he exulted in the adventurous deeds of the Vikings. He never tired of hearing the old tales his aged grandfather told him. Nothing so captivated him as the story of Eric the Red and his conquest of Green Land. One of his favorite books had been a pigskin-bound volume of *Torfai Groenlandia Antiqua,* over which he pored many a night under the beams of the Midnight Sun upon the ledge of his window sill.

His daydreaming was ever of Eric's storied Brattahild, of his dragon-prowed ships plowing the seas, bringing

colonists from Iceland and Norway to populate the Green Land where the "Skrellings" lived. Where the great white whale swam in droves. Where the fjords and mountain streams swarmed with salmon and cod. Where there were greater herds of deer than in Lapland.

With approaching manhood, Hans' dreams were supplanted by the desire to serve as a minister of the gospel. And not until he came to his first parish in the Lofoten Islands did his thoughts turn fervidly toward Greenland. There he read again from the pigskin-bound book, and into his heart surged a new and deeper interest in the Greenland Vikings, this time, a compassion for their spiritual welfare.

At the seminary, he had learned that it was possible, though communication had been broken for three centuries, that the Viking colonists still lived somewhere in the Arctic land. For hundreds of years, no ambassadors of the Christian Church had been sent to them. With zeal kindled from the fires of the Reformation, Hans yearned to bring the gospel to his stranded countrymen.

On July 3, Hans stood from early morning in the bow of the *Hope* as it thrashed out of the rolling waves of the ocean and into a great fjord, free of ice. Today, if they could find a likely harbor, they would land upon the soil of Greenland!

The deck echoed with the jubilance of ocean-weary men. And crowded close beside Hans were his two young sons, exultant over the adventure of living in a strange land.

From the direction of the land, small dark objects appeared tossing upon the waves, sometimes appearing completely submerged in the trough of waters, then riding the crest of the waves. Always, they came nearer to the *Hope*.

"Seals! They are seals!" shouted one of the sailors.

The sharp eyes of twelve-year-old Paul peered excitedly at the specks, and he shook his head.

"No, Papa, they are not seals," he said. "They are people, people in long boats! Coming out to meet us!"

The preacher's eyes were not as sharp as his son's. "Paul! Tell me, what do the boats look like? Are they like our row boats?"

"No, Papa. They are long, very long. And narrow."

Long and narrow.

Like the graceful, skimming shallow boats of the Vikings! A dragon's head upon the slender bow. A great sail uplifted when out upon the open sea. These had raised no sail, but were rowing out to meet them.

People in long boats! His stranded countrymen, his Viking kinsmen! The people for whom he had struggled thirteen years to reach. Were they coming out to meet them now?

In this great moment, he wanted to be with his trusty Gertrude. His heart thumping with excitement, Hans hurried down to where his wife stood with little Kristine and Solveig. All about them were the shouts of, "People coming! People rowing out to meet us!"

"These are *our* people!"

Hans Egede's lips quivered with emotion as he looked into Gertrude's understanding eyes. Now at last, after the tedious years, they would see the countrymen for whom they had labored so ardently!

Paul and the younger Nils had followed their father, stood near him now as he discerned the three boats skimming the surface of the water, and approaching quickly.

"Such queer boats, Papa!" Nils tugged at his father's

sleeve. "We never had such boats in Norway. And only one man in a boat."

Hans strained forward, saw that what his son declared was true.

"These men, they are *not* our people! *Not* our countrymen," said Gertrude. Her keen vision perceived the brown skins, the slanted eyes and squat stature of the men approaching at incredible speed in their shallow craft.

Hans struggled against a vision that dimmed with tears of excitement. But soon he, too, saw unmistakably that the men were brown of skin, black of hair, of a race very unlike his own!

"No! These are not our people!" The words thudded from his lips.

There were no dragon heads, no serpentine tongues carved upon the prows of these frail-looking boats of tightly-stretched skin. And the men who sat as though tied into the covered craft were clothed also in skins. Their inquisitive faces looked up as they circled about the *Hope*.

A fourth boat now joined them, a vessel much larger and of a construction not unlike the familiar Norwegian fishing boats. There were nearly thirty faces looking up with frank curiosity, and all but one of them were women. Great knobs of shining black hair stood up from the tops of their heads. They were dressed in a strange trouserlike costume of skins, a few of them barebreasted in the warm July sun.

In one end of the large boat sat the only man, a gnarled and wizened creature, hunched and mumbling. As he looked upward to Hans and his companions, he shrieked angrily, then wailed a weird incantation.

"No. These are not our people." Hans repeated the

words to himself, trying to make himself accept a fact that seared into his very heart.

Against the persistent tales they had heard of the extermination of the Viking settlers in Greenland by a barbaric people, the "Skrellings," Hans and Gertrude had long held to the hope that somewhere in the strange land, their countrymen were still safe and alive. The sight of these brown-skinned "Skrellings" stunned them into closer realization that the unhappy rumors they had heard could well be the tragic truth.

In his exhaustive searching for the least wisp of news concerning the Viking colony, Hans had heard the story of their annihilation many times. Yet it did not seem probable to him that a settlement which had flourished for several generations and which had numbered nearly ten thousand people would be wiped out. He had heard rumors, too, that while the Western Settlement might be evacuated, the Eastern Settlement (doubtless somewhere on the formidable East Coast) continued. King Frederick had sanctioned the establishment of this new colony largely because of his own belief that the Norsemen, though sunken in heathendom, still lived on in Greenland.

But now as Hans Egede looked down upon the skin-covered boats and the skin-clothed people, he surrendered almost all hope that the Vikings still survived.

The Lord had at length brought him safely to this land for the purpose of preaching the gospel.

To these people who had killed his own countrymen?

He heard the slant-eyed people babbling in a foreign tongue, not a Norwegian accent to be heard. Perspiration beaded his forehead.

He felt Gertrude's hand steal quietly into his own.

His eyes shut upon unshed tears, and bowing his head, he prayed, "Not my will, but Thine!"

Chapter 3

LARGE-BONED AND DARK were they who peered up from the greasy, skin-covered boats. Plump-cheeked, gleaming-bronze faces of young women and children. Flabby, creased visages of older, stoop-shouldered women. Distrust glowered in the countenance of the seared, weather-beaten old man crouched in the boatload of women, mumbling and shaking his head. Physical strength and daring were in the stolid features of the three men paddling close now to the women and the sinister old man.

All stared upward, gaping open-lipped at the white people looking down from the deck of the *Hope*.

"It is at you they stare the most, Mama," said Paul, "at you and the girls."

Eight-year-old Kristine looked reprovingly at the girls and women in the boat and said, "They ought to be ashamed! They don't even have skirts on—but pants, like men!"

Despite the weighty thoughts that assailed him, Hans Egede chuckled at his daughter's comment.

"So they do, Kristine! When you get to know them better, you will have to acquaint them with the dictates of European fashion."

"But they do have the queerest clothes, Papa! Why, it looks as though their clothes are made of skins, like the Laplanders."

"Yes, something like the Laplanders," replied her mother, "and I believe they are staring at us womenfolks because *they* think *we* are dressed so queerly."

As the *Hope* continued down the fjord, the skin boats followed. More and more natives joined their curious comrades about the white man's ship. Soon dozens of the little boats and several of the larger type, swarmed about.

But Hans now lifted his eyes beyond the natives and to the cloud-encircled peaks rising high on the eastern horizon; the great cones of snow and ice were buttressed by ranges of lower mountains and knobby hills of green and grey. No tree was to be seen, only a broad seam of grass covered the foothills, splotched here and there with flowers gay in the bright sun and splattered with the grey of boulders and shale. Along the shore was a narrow band of rounded stones and boulders. Hans found it hard to believe that he was only eight days' journey from the inhospitable shores of the East Coast.

"This is the right latitude," the captain said to him, "and that island there would make a good place to land. The Dutch whaling crews claim the natives are not warlike, surely not like the Indians of America, and yet it might be well to have the protection of an island."

"Scant protection, perhaps," replied Hans. "The natives here seem to be very much at home in the water. But the sheltered place there on the island should make a good location."

As the Captain's small boat was lowered into the water, the natives, chattering excitedly among themselves, rowed their boats to a respectable distance. Eagerly, Hans

climbed into the boat and was the first to scramble out and up the stone-strewn beach.

"Greenland! The earth of Greenland under my feet at last! O Father in Heaven, I thank thee!"

Hungrily, his hands reached for poppies nodding scarlet cups and he held them to his nostrils. "God's lilies of the field, Captain! How good it is to see them, to hold them in my hands again. Oh, how my heart rejoices! I am lifted up in spirit, to be here where the Lord has led me! I want to call this island, the 'Island of Hope.' The water out there, that shall be the Sea of Hope."

"And the colony, what shall that be called?"

"It shall be Hope, too—Good Hope."

From the sagas and the tales handed down through generations ever since the Bergen sailors had traded in Greenland waters, Hans had learned that there was no timber for building in the land. The founders of the Western and Eastern Settlements had made their houses of stone and turf, their churches of hewn stone. With him, Hans brought planks and beams for the roofs and framework of his houses; the walls would be of stone and earth.

As he and his men began unloading goods upon the island, he saw the natives cautiously land not far away. Curiosity overcame them when they saw the white men carrying the planks up from the boats. Like avid little children watching a trick performance, they trooped about, closer and closer.

Each day, men, women, and children came in growing numbers. They carried no weapons. They brought nothing in their hands, only small babies upon their backs. The one obvious motive that brought them was curiosity, a consuming curiosity.

That there was anything to fear from these small-statured people, Hans could not believe. They seemed hardly to be of a murderous race guilty of killing the Viking colonists!

Perhaps somewhere in this vast Greenland, the Vikings still lived. Perhaps these harmless brown-skinned Greenlanders could lead him to the colonies settled in the 10th century by the daring Eric the Red.

Hans must become the trusted friend of the Greenlanders. He must learn their language so that he could communicate with them, tell them of his great yearning to find his lost countrymen.

But more, he must learn their language so that he could bring to them the gospel. These men and women and children who stood about, gaping, had souls in the bondage of heathen darkness, souls as precious in the sight of God as those of any Norsemen who might be imprisoned somewhere in the land.

He smiled at them, tried to show his friendliness. They smiled shyly in return. The little brown men came closer. A few of the braver ones stooped down to help carry the heavy planks to the slowly growing walls of stone and turf.

But when the beams were set in place to form the roof of the house, there was consternation written in the faces of the nearly one hundred natives gathered about.

They began to gesticulate and to pantomime. They pointed toward the sun, shivered as with great cold, shut their eyes. They pointed to the ice on the mountain tops and then at the *Hope,* and forcefully clamped their hands upon their heads. They pointed also to the snow high upon the peaks, indicated that it would slide down the mountain sides.

Did they mean that the ship would be crushed in the

ice of winter? That the house would be buried under an avalanche of snow? Hans finally realized that the Greenlanders were not only hinting, but were insisting that the white men leave their shores—they did not welcome the permanent intrusion of the Europeans!

The house builders continued their work, but with misgivings. The next day there was not a single native to watch them. From that time the Greenlanders disappeared as completely as if the wind had blown them away.

By August 31, the house stood complete. It was to shelter not only the Egede family, but all the colonists and sailors who were to remain there through the winter, a total of 46 persons. Already, the companion ship had returned to Norway.

Not until the following summer could Hans and his people expect a ship to arrive from the homeland with a new supply of provisions. At that time, also, the *Hope* would return with a cargo of fish and furs which the colonists must obtain from hunting and fishing and trade with the Greenlanders. The very existence of the mission depended upon the success of the commercial trade of the colony.

Winter, Hans knew, would soon bind up the land. A winter that would be harsh and cruel. A winter of long, dark night. Since the colony of Good Hope was situated in approximately the same latitude as his native Nordland district in Norway, Hans knew that the sun would disappear in November and would not reappear until perhaps February. Even in the last week of August there had been flurries of snow to hurry the thatching of their house roof.

There could be no more building until the following summer. Now they must obtain fish and other fresh

meat for the winter months of imprisonment. They had brought no such supplies from Norway, because they believed that fish, especially, would be plentiful in the Greenland fjords and streams.

On an early September morning, Hans and a party of men rowed away from the Island of Hope and entered a fjord which the sailors promptly named the "Preacher Fjord." The fog had lifted, and they saw barren mountain cliffs rising sheer and high out of the waters of the fjord. They saw also meadows still pleasantly green spread like scattered small blankets over the mountain sides. In sheltered coves they spied little groves of dwarfed elder and birch.

They came upon the fresh bones of caribou and seal, but though they made long excursions into the mainland, not once did they catch sight of the brown-skinned Eskimos. Once they stumbled across a shambled dwelling of turf and stone, the roof gone, one wall completely tumbled down. It was, they realized, the deserted winter home of the Greenlanders.

They found salmon when they came to a large river and were able to catch a few. Farther up the stream, they landed and explored a pleasant valley where they discovered a herd of caribou. But they could not get close enough to shoot any. They returned to their boats with only an Arctic hare.

Shortly after they returned to Good Hope, another expedition set forth. A few days later, the men were home again with but one caribou, three rabbits and a few fish. To their dismay, the methods of hunting and fishing they had employed in Norway were not effective in this land. And the long dark night of winter would soon hide the meager manna of Greenland in snow and ice.

The men hired by the Bergen merchants to go to Green-

land to help build the trading post were quick to grumble about the food. Again, as when the *Hope* had been surrounded by ice and all seemed doomed, they had harsh words to rail at the missionary since they held him as first cause of their being in this improvident wilderness.

Heartsick from the cursings and accusations, Hans took some of his more loyal men with him to hunt and explore further for possible food. They trudged up boulder-studded and shale-strewn hills and valleys but found no game. The cheerfulness they had shown their leader when they left Good Hope soon deserted them, and they became almost as silent as the land about them.

There was not a movement of life over the snow-streaked foothills. There were no trees through which the wind could gossip. Snow had already fallen, had been blown by the wind into drifts in the lee of hills while great bare patches still browned the sides of the valleys.

For Hans, the glum silence of his men became too oppressive. These rugged fellows looked to him for comfort and guidance; they must all look beyond to the Lord for strength for each day's need.

"Come, let us sing," he suggested. "There seem to be no rabbits or caribou hereabouts for us to frighten."

There was no response from the men. Alone he sang:

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon . . . "

As he began the second stanza, he heard Halvor Haarstad's quavering tenor humming the melody with him. None of the others joined them, so the two sang on together.

When they started down a pleasant dale, Hans and Halvor abruptly stopped their song. A startled hare

popped out from a small cairn of rock. Lars Rikustad's shot brought down the white-furred creature.

The tension broke. All were near hilarious as they returned to the boat, and no one objected when Hans asked that they row even farther up the fjord to explore.

They had not gone far beyond a huge promontory of granite cliffs when they sighted a small island—and men standing about skin tents and a hummocklike hut rising from the sheltered side of a hill.

"Let us go visit them," said Hans. "We must make friends of the natives."

His men did not object. But they cast apprehensive glances at three spear-bearing men that came down to the shore as they approached.

There was no smile of welcome on the faces of the Greenlanders. Hostility and suspicion burned in the black eyes.

Hans smiled broadly at them. How could he let them know he meant them no harm? That he wanted only their friendship, a friendship he needed to help sustain the colonies? A friendship he desired so that he might bring to them the love of Christ?

He tried to look pleasant. He implored his men to be cheerful, to demonstrate good will. But they kept their seats in the boat. And the Greenlanders on the shore made unmistakable motions that the white men were unwanted.

One could not make friends by running away from them, that was certain. So Hans stepped out of the boat, walked up to the gesticulating natives.

They retreated a few paces. Hans kept smiling at them, stood still. Minutes of tense silence followed. Then, though he knew they could not understand what

he said, he spoke to them what was in his heart. Slowly, the spears dropped to less menacing positions.

Seeing the bright buttons on Hans' coat, one of the men cautiously neared. Hans allowed him to come close, to reach an inquisitive finger to touch the button. The native very obviously admired the buttons, desired them.

As he continued to talk kindly to the Greenlander, Hans reached into his pocket and drew out a knife. At the sight of it, the native drew back, raised his spear.

But quietly, Hans cut off a button. He held it out to the man. Eagerly, the Greenlander clutched the treasure.

Now his fellows approached, too, each with a small knife. A few moments later, all the buttons were gone from the coat. But with this small sacrifice, Hans felt that he had gained a small measure of the Greenlanders' confidence and good will.

He motioned that he wanted to visit their house. It was soon evident that they understood him, but it was with considerable reluctance that they started for their dwelling.

The first one stooped before a sealskin-covered tunnel entrance to the sod and stone hut. Crawling on hands and knees, Hans followed to make his first inspection of an Eskimo winter home.

It was, apparently, an old dwelling and was now under repair. The tents about were evidence that the natives had not this season begun to live in their sod hut. Dismal light filtered through two small openings covered with the paunch-skin of some animal. On the earthen floor lay the scattered debris of old bones and skins. Along the entire rear wall Hans saw a large platform of skins stretched upon a framework of driftwood and stone.

There were smaller platforms along the opposite wall and these were all the furnishings there were.

Where, Hans wondered, did they build their fire? Where did they cook their food? Keep their provisions?

As he looked about the dingy dwelling, he tried to think of something he could do to prove to these watchful and suspicious people that he was their friend. He would, he decided, return the next day with gifts for them—metal fishhooks and needles. Such tools they would surely appreciate. They would want to trade for more, and food was needed in the colony. He had noticed that fresh caribou hides and piles of salmon and codfish lay on a clumsy platform near one of the tents and out of reach of the dogs.

With renewed hope for winning the friendship of the Greenlanders, Hans and Halvor started out for the island the next day. They brought with them a generous supply of bright-colored beads and steel needles for the women, fishhooks and knives for the men.

But when they rounded the promontory of cliffs, they saw no sign of life upon the little island. The skin tents were gone. The platform of supplies had disappeared. They landed, found the hut deserted. Even the hides stretched upon the platforms in the house were gone. So were the driftwood frames!

In the weeks that followed, Hans searched for miles about Good Hope only to find a few deserted winter huts. There was no doubt about it, the Greenlanders were distrustful of the white colonists.

September had brought the first heavy snowfall. The grey world of Arctic winter came in October, grey sky with dark grey clouds, often a blanket of grey fog enveloping all, and shrouding the sun. The very light of

day appeared grey as the sun hugged the somber southern horizon for a shorter time each day.

Now in November, gloom overspread the landscape locked in its armor of ice and snow. A mantle of dusk cloaked the land in long, slanting shadows. Noontime brought only a twilight sky as the sun hid behind clouds and colored the heavens, the mountain tops and the sea with soft lavender, purple and rose. Frequent gales whipped the snow into the ravines and canyons.

In the overcrowded house at Good Hope, the mutinous complaining of the hireling men became more strident. Confined in a small space, the long dark hours allowing them little to do, they became ever more querulous, bewailing the scanty rations and the cold that seeped through the sturdy walls of the house. The prisonlike existence made them irritable with one another. There was frequent quarreling, almost constant bickering and faultfinding.

While the mouthings of the discontented men were more often in his ear, Hans' greatest concern was the loss of contact with natives. Communication with them was vital for the continuance of the Mission station!

In the small room of the house which had been allotted to the Egede family, Gertrude cradled the little Solveig in her arms and proud to share the problems of this man of God, she often encouraged, "It will be all right, Hans. It will work out in the good Lord's time!"

Chapter 4

GERTRUDE LOOKED UP from her work, the white-gold braid like a snug halo about her head, and she smiled understandingly at Hans. No need to tell her what he was doing; she knew that he had need to be away from the rancorous men, away from the sound of their churlish conversation—away, even in the petrifying cold outside, but alone with his God.

He put on the greatcoat brought from his Arctic parish in the Lofoten Islands, and he knew that it would not keep him warm long if he did not keep moving once he got outside. As he started out the door of the house, he saw the men cast furtive, grim glances in his direction; they had not openly accused him, but he knew they held him responsible for the welfare of the fifteen men he had sent out three days earlier. The men were to hunt, to obtain, if possible, some fresh meat for the Christmas holiday approaching. They had not yet returned.

Hans was grateful that the men spared his wife and children of their reproaches. Much as they might persecute him with their sulky complaints and venemous maledictions, they treated Gertrude with respect for her own

bravery, answered her nothing when she defended and praised her husband.

The dry snow crackled under his heavy feet, as he climbed the bouldered hill several rods from the house. It was so dark, that he walked slowly, almost feeling his way. But as he reached the summit of the hill, the black sky smoldered into shades of grey. Suddenly, light burst with awesome glory before his eyes. A curtain of shimmering silver-white hung in magnificence across the sky. The curtain dissolved into streamers of green, of flaming orange-red and yellow that danced above the horizon of tumbled mountains. The bands and rays of color advanced and retreated, faded again into grey and white, then reappeared in brilliant hues to make the snow at his feet luminous with beauty.

Quickly, like a celestial vision ascending into the heavens, the northern lights were gone, leaving Hans still looking upward. At Lofoten, he had seen the aurora borealis, but never in such grandeur as this.

Awed, he had stood still for many minutes. Now he realized he was shaking with cold, that he must get back to the house. But his burden was lifted, his thoughts were no longer troubled. The heavens had declared the glory of his God; the firmament had shown forth His handiwork.

Somewhere, somehow, the fifteen men were safe; a surging sureness of this fact flooded his heart as he turned back. The furious wind of the past three days was gone; the air was calm. Hans was glad for the sake of the men that once again there was stillness over the land; the alternate sighing and screaming of the wind about the colony house had threatened havoc to the already taut nerves of the men imprisoned there. The sailors, especially, rebelled at the hacking monotony of

the existence. All the men fretted over the fifteen men who had not returned, worried because of the harsh future before them, the night of Arctic winter, the continuous lack of a comfortable warmth in the house, the ominous threat of dwindling provisions. Even Knute Larson, the most jovial and good-natured of the men, was restless and increasingly irritable.

The Egede children were able to find a measure of enjoyment in their play. They had also daily lessons to do. Paul's crayons and pencils were a boon for the men as well as for himself for even the roughest of the sailors watched his drawings with interest.

When Hans returned to the house, he met several of the men dressed as warmly as possible and setting out on brief forays, to get much needed exercise in the open. He was happy to find that they returned to the house in greatly improved spirits.

Suddenly, there was a clamor of shouting voices outside the door, and the fifteen men of the expedition were home! After a brief salvo of greetings, Halvor Haarstad, the leader, exclaimed:

"Pastor, we have been living with the Greenlanders! For three days and three nights we stayed with them in their huts. And I am minded to think that we have made friends of them. But we bring back no meat."

"The news you bring back, Halvor," said Hans, exultantly, "it is better than meat, for when we make friends with the natives, then it will be possible to trade with them and to bring them the Bread of Life."

Fury slashed from the eyes of Torbert, one of the most troublesome of the sailors.

"Bread of Life," he snarled. "I'll take some fresh meat!"

Hans turned to the man, the blasphemous words cutting

into his heart. Though he had heard much cursing and vile talk from the worst of the sailors, he could never become inured to it. To remonstrate was nearly always fruitless, but he turned to Torbert and said, "The Lord forgive you, Torbert!"

Aaron, a giant of a fellow now came up, grinning, to greet Hans, and Halvor said, "Aaron here, he seemed to strike the fancy of the Greenlanders. What the rest of us did, that did not amount to anything, but whatever Aaron did, now that was something!"

Aaron chuckled.

"I do not know why, but there was one Greenlander by the name of Arok, he just wouldn't leave me. Stayed right beside me. Slept beside me when I slept. I think he got the idea that because our names are alike, we sort of belonged together. I couldn't understand a word he said. But I could tell he was always saying nice things about me to the other Greenlanders!"

"You know, Pastor," said Halvor, "we have been pitying the Greenlanders, thinking how cold they must have it in their houses without stoves or fireplaces? Well, I tell you, Pastor, they have it much warmer in their houses than we have it here in our house!"

Happily, the returned men shed their coats, crowded around Hans, each one eager to contribute to the narrative of their adventure.

The hunting party had come upon the Eskimo village the first day, shortly after landing on the mainland. The four huts were huddled close together on a sheltered hillside. When the white hunters arrived, the native men and boys who stood about the huts appeared very curious about their visitors, but gave them no encouragement to enter their homes. An increasing number of men, women and children poured from the tunnel entrances of the four

houses until the Norwegians counted nearly a hundred and fifty gaping at them.

Not until the wind rose in satanic rage and made it impossible even for the fur-clad Eskimos to stand outside were the freezing hunters given shelter. One of the dwellings was vacated for their use. To the amazement of the white men, all the Greenlanders, except a few who remained on watch, took up quarters in the other three huts.

In their strange abode, the hunters' teeth ceased chattering. Since they found no other place to sit, they squatted upon the skin platforms that filled the greater part of the one-room house. An Eskimo dog snarled threateningly from under one end of the platform. She lay with her litter of puppies curled together in a lumpy ball of fur.

Both heat and light came from three crudely-carved pans of soapstone; blubber oil fed a flame upon wicks of dried moss. But as quickly as the men felt the warmth of the room, its reeking odors engulfed them. The stink of rotting entrails, of excrement, mingled with bones and caribou hooves and half-cured hides. Walrus and seal meat hanging from the sodded ceiling. Condensed moisture dripping, making the earth walls dank.

"Yes, indeed, it was warm there, Pastor," said Halvor. "But man, the stench!"

"Stench?" exclaimed Aaron. "If you thought it was bad in the house where you were, you should have tried living with fifty greasy, grimy Greenlanders crowded into one hut! Such body odor! The air was thick with steam from their sweaty bodies!"

Halvor grinned at Aaron.

"That is the price you must pay to be a special guest among the Greenlanders!" Then turning to Hans, he said, "We ordinary mortals were not allowed to go call-

ing among the natives, but with Aaron it was a different matter. He was welcome anywhere, his friend Arok saw to that."

"Tell me about it, Aaron," said Hans. "What magic spell did you have?"

"That is more than I can tell you," replied Aaron. "This Arok fellow just adopted me. He showed himself to be very friendly. Naturally, I tried to be friendly, too. I was a little frightened at first to go around with him alone and be the only white man among forty to fifty Greenlanders in a single house."

"You say that *fifty* of them can live in a single house?" asked Hans.

"Yes, Pastor! I never realized before how many people can live together in such a small space. Their huts are only about 8 feet wide and perhaps 20 feet long, and just high enough to stand in!"

"I can understand then, that it would be warm," remarked Hans.

"I tell, you, Pastor," said Aaron, "it steamed in one of those huts almost like in a Finnish bathhouse. Both little children and adults would lie around naked. I just sweat and sweat until Arok pulled some of my clothes off me."

Aaron paused, turned to Halvor and said:

"You maybe did not notice, but there wasn't much steam coming out from the hole in the roof of your house. How it poured out of the hut where I and the fifty Greenlanders lived! Honestly, you can just about tell how many people there are in a Greenlander hut, by the amount of steam coming out through that little hole in the roof."

"What did you eat?" asked Hans.

"Seal meat. Raw. But not with the appetite that Arok

and his friends had," replied Aaron. "Truly, they live almost like wild animals, eat uncooked meat, gnaw the bones, chew blubber until it oozes from their mouths.

"Two and three families live together in one house. They all sleep on that platform of skins at night. In the daytime they sit on the platform. It is the only furniture they have. The women are busy all the time, sewing skins and chewing hides to make them soft. Some of the older women have teeth worn down to the gums from so much chewing! Arok and the other men just sat around and jabbered, sometimes repaired a harpoon or maybe a dog whip. To hunt and to fish, that seems to be the only work of the men."

"So you made friends," Hans said, gratified.

"Yes. We gave Arok and his friends all the fishhooks and needles we had with us. They seemed especially pleased when we ate the food they offered us. We were so hungry we were ready to eat even raw meat. Yes, I am sure that we have made many friends."

That Aaron was right was proved a few days later, for a pair of young Greenlanders appeared at the colony house. They were quite easily coaxed into spending the night as guests. When they left the next day, Hans gave each of them a fishhook.

On succeeding days, other Greenlanders came, stayed a brief while, then departed, beaming over the gift of a needle or hook.

Hans rejoiced at this show of friendliness. He saw that his children were especially fascinated by the strange attire of the Eskimos; and they were quick to observe little details that so often escaped him. It was not long before Nils and Paul decided that nothing was so desirable as an outfit of fur clothes such as their callers wore.

Bulkily dressed, the brown men were, but comfortable in the most extreme weather. They wore knee-high boots and trousers of sealskin; this was surmounted by a parka of fur rising in a hood over the head. Paul and Nils were greatly impressed by the sight of one rather cocky Greenlander who wore a parka of caribou skin with the ears of the caribou projecting jauntily over the Greenlander's head and reminding them of a picture they had seen of Satan and his horns.

This same fellow wore two pairs of heavy boots. When he pulled the outer pair off, Hans and the boys were surprised to see a layer of dried grass lining the sole of the boot. The next time Nils and Paul went outside, they brought handfuls of grass from the hillside and dried it before the fire. This done, they stuffed the grass into their shoes, crammed their feet into the remaining space and hurried outside. For some time they played outside, then came back to Hans and Gertrude to report that the soles of their feet had never been as comfortably warm as with the grass cushion.

"Those Greenlanders, Papa," said Nils, "they are not so stupid as they look. They can teach us much about how to live in Greenland."

Hans observed that the boys' sincere interest and open admiration for them was conveyed to the visiting Greenlanders. They sensed the inquiring spirit of these yellow-haired, blue-eyed children, and they were always more relaxed and content when the little ones were with them.

While Hans tried awkwardly to find some way to begin verbal intercourse with the natives, his sons listened intently to every spoken Greenlandic expression. They were as eager as he to learn the native language, but they were unhampered by any preconceived academic approach to its learning.

"Papa," said Nils, after the man with the caribou ears had gone, "Paul and I have each learned a Greenlander word today!"

"You have!"

"Sure! *Kamik.* That is the word for boot, the skin boot the Greenlanders wear. Paul thinks so, too, and he has another word for you."

Hans was surprised. He had not counted on help from his children in learning the new tongue. Yet what could be more natural than that they should be more quick to acquire it than the adults?

"What is the word you have learned, Paul?"

"Timiak," said Paul. "That is what they call the jacket with the hood. This last fellow seemed to think his *timiak* was something special because it had those ears on it."

"We must write down your Greenlander words," said Hans, joyfully. "We shall start a word book!"

Thus began for the Egede children an exciting game of discovering new words for their papa to write down in the Word Book. It was a happy day when Hans and his boys realized that the natives, too, were curious to learn the names of some of the strange objects they saw about the white man's house. One afternoon Paul perceived that the word *"Kina"* was the inquiry, "What is this called?'

"Kina?" asked Paul of the shiny-faced visitor that day; and he pointed to the garment worn under the *timiak.*

"Anorak," replied the Eskimo, pleased.

Kina—kina? It was the key for opening the door to understanding the Greenlanders' language!

Kina? It would open the way to bring the message of salvation to these kindly, peaceful people.

Kina? The word might even help to solve the mystery of the lost Vikings!

Chapter 5

"AI-AI-AI-AI-AI!"

Sharply the anguished wailing cut across the night sounds of the Greenlander hut. Hans, lying in a corner of the platform, was instantly aroused. Apprehensive, he had slept little and lightly.

Suddenly he regretted not having remained with his men in the hut their native hosts had vacated for their use. Whatever this shrieking might mean, there was no comfort in knowing that the nearly fifty natives here could quickly bar his exit through the dog-filled tunnel entrance.

As he had visited with the Eskimos who had come to the colony house, he had become convinced that one of the quickest means of gaining the confidence of the natives would be to stay alone with them in their huts. They had been reluctant in allowing him to remain with them; some had shown open suspicion of his request. And the filth and nauseating odors nearly drove him out again. He had to remind himself again and again that even the Lord Himself had abode with Simon, the leper.

While inwardly he retched from the stink of rotting entrails, he had lain down upon the platform to sleep.

Now three blubber oil lamps threw flickering shadows over the men, women, and children stretched and curled haphazardly over the sleeping space. Hans perspired in the steamy, acrid atmosphere; because it was extremely cold outside, the air vent in the ceiling had been covered with a slab of sod. The hut would have been warm enough without the heat of the lamps; now with moisture condensing along the earthen ceiling, an occasional drop splattered upon the platform or floor, slid down one of the chunks of suspended meat.

"Unaya—unaya—unaya!"

A quavering, high-pitched voice joined the first. It was a cry of despair, Hans was certain. Cautiously raising himself on one elbow, he saw two women, hands over their faces as they crouched, shrieking.

Between them lay the inert figure of an old man. Reeking from excrement and age, the pains of his illness traced even in death upon the wrinkled parchment of his face.

"Ai-ai-ai!"

Wail after wail pierced Hans' ear as, one after another, the sleepers awoke to find that death had crept stealthily into their midst and snatched from them the patriarch. One after another they prostrated themselves in grief, their faces flat upon the floor, and all screaming.

The gruelling minutes dragged by for Hans. The sobbing, the screaming, the wailing, crescendoed. An hour passed, and the mourners, hoarse now from their lamentations, gradually subsided. A charged quiet filled the room.

He had read of barbaric tribes that required the sacrifice of a human being when the evil spirit of death had robbed them. His heart thumped as he thought of what the ominous silence might portend.

But soon the little children slumbered again, and a few

of the older people. As the morning hours wore by, some men crept out through the sealskin-draped door.

The clamor of wailing renewed as natives from other huts covertly came to view the dead man. Soon the two women who had watched beside him, wrapped him in the beautiful caribou hide upon which he had lain. Three men lifted him up, carried him out through the tunnel past snarling, flesh-hungry dogs.

Compassionately Hans followed them out, watched the motley procession start up the mountain with downcast heads. To his amazement, the Greenlanders walked as though they did not know where they were going. Back and forth they zigzagged up the mountain side. Nor did all follow the same path. Finally, after a circuitous route, they came to a little knoll where there were mounds of rock like sentinels gone to sleep.

Hans watched them lay the old man on the ground. They covered him securely with the caribou skin and extra hides of seal. They placed his harpoon and spear, an extra pair of *kamiks,* beside him. With stones and little rocks wrenched from the ground, they built a mound over him. This done, they trudged mournfully back, again following the zigzag course, and never raising their eyes.

Hans' heart burned with pity for them. They were as a people pursued by unseen enemies.

Oh, to teach them that there was no need to fear death, to teach them that no evil spirits pursued him who knew salvation in Christ! Oh, to tell them of the glorious gates of heaven waiting for the children of the heavenly King!

It struck him with a pang that somewhere in the ice-armored land his own countrymen could well be hidden and, like these strange people, in need of the saving gospel.

Here at hand were an alien people whose spiritual

need cried to him for succor. Their souls, too, were as precious in God's sight as the countrymen he had striven to reach for thirteen years.

It might take many years to find the Viking descendants. He might never locate them in his lifetime.

With a clarity of conviction driving like a shaft of light into his soul, Hans knew that these heathen brown-skinned ones, *they* were henceforth his people, also!

He walked down to the hut where his men sat waiting, and unburdened himself to them.

"We cannot afford to lose time! Precious souls are lost until we can speak the native tongue! We cannot even hope to find our countrymen until these natives direct us. We cannot trade profitably with them until we can make ourselves understood. We can learn nothing of their language while we are separate from them. We can learn only while we are among them."

"Yes. That is reasonable," said Halvor. "But who, what white man *could* live with them?"

"It would truly take a man of strong constitution, yet it must be done."

"I think, too, Pastor, you'll agree that it would take a man who is *liked* by the Greenlanders," said Lars. "A man they don't trust would surely be unwise to try to live with them."

The men looked questioningly at one another. Glances settled upon Aaron.

"You look at me," said Aaron.

"Yes," said Andreas Paulson, "you are surely the favorite among the natives. But, have you the courage?"

Aaron was intently thoughtful for a moment. Then he replied:

"Our pastor was brave enough to spend the night alone

with fifty of them in order to prove our friendliness. He came to no harm. And he is not a large man."

Aaron, the sinewy giant, had outwrestled every man in the colony. He had a spirit of adventure. Of daring. He was also impulsive, Hans realized, a man of quick, blind temper that would ignite in a second's time.

Yet who but he would dare?

Spurred by his companions, Aaron agreed to remain with the natives. Since Hans and his men had promised Gertrude to return to the colony that day, it was necessary that they start out soon. So Aaron promptly found Arok, disappeared into one of the huts with him.

Hans and his men now quietly left. But they had not reached their boat before a score of Greenlander men hurried after them. Chattering and motioning excitedly, it was very clear that they had no desire to keep the one white man whom they regarded as an intruder.

Hans knew that he could make no satisfactory explanation as to why Aaron was staying, even if he could speak their tongue. So he ignored the frantic pantomime and took his place in the boat as it pushed from the shore.

A few days later, Paul and Nils rushed into the colony house to inform him of the fast approach of three *kayaks* upon the open waters of the fjord. Within a few minutes, the long skin-covered boats were beached, and three Greenlanders stood before Hans gesticulating and explaining in their own language some message about Aaron.

"They say he is all right," said Paul.

"How do you know?" asked Hans, himself unable to make sense to the vowel-filled mouthings of the three men.

"They say so," insisted Paul. "I am sure that is what

they mean." Then turning to the natives, he asked, "Aaron *ajungilak?*"

Comprehension and assent wreathed the bronze faces.

Little by little, Paul and Nils helped their father piece together the meaning of the natives: Aaron was well. He was being given good care by the Greenlanders. However, they wanted to be rid of him. They felt that, at least, they ought to be rewarded for putting up with him this long!

Cordially smiling, Hans gave them brightly-colored beads. Good will glowed in their eyes. But when he handed them a letter to give to Aaron, they eyed the piece of paper incredulously. Another fishhook apiece convinced them they could afford to carry this skin that was no skin.

Toward the middle of February, the colony trader, with a boatload of men, went to the village where Aaron sojourned. They reported him to be in good health, though that was because Aaron was an exceptionally hardy man. He had, they said, been given quite a buffeting by several of the Greenlanders who had decided to learn if the big, blond fellow was *inuit.*

Aaron had revealed to the trader a fact surprising to the Europeans: the Greenlanders looked with condescension on the white men. They themselves were *"inuit," the* people. Any other race was inferior. For what was so much to be admired as a hunter who could kill a walrus or a polar bear? What skill was more to be desired than that of hurling a deadly harpoon? Physical prowess, it seemed, especially as demonstrated in the hunt, was the mark of heroism. Fortunately, Aaron had outwrestled them and so maintained some vestige of Greenlander respect for the alien whites; they had even decided they might risk calling Aaron *inuit.*

When March came, Hans found the weather to be such that he might hazard a trip to the native village. He discovered an Aaron with blacked eyes and other bruises as witness to further scuffling.

"I lost my temper, Pastor," admitted Aaron. "But we are all good friends again."

"Can you understand much of what they say?"

"I fear I am not much of a scholar," replied Aaron. "I can not say that I have learned much of their language, but somehow I feel that I have learned quite a bit about the people themselves. They are really a peaceful sort, perhaps a little rough in a playful sort of way, but harmless. I don't think they intend us any harm, although I am not sure in the case of their *Angakoks.*"

"Angakoks?" Hans was puzzled.

"Yes." Aaron looked at the circle of men, women and children who crowded persistently about them, peering at the new visitor from the white colony. "Do you remember that old man who sat with all the women in that big 'woman-boat' that came out to meet us that day we landed? The old man who shrieked and howled as though he were bewitched?'

Hans nodded, quickly recalling the wizened face, the mumbling and shrieking, the distrust in the black eyes.

"Well, he was one, I am sure. Sort of a witch doctor, a pagan priest you might say. It seems they have much influence over the people. The people ask their advice and help whenever they are sick or troubled."

"Is there one living in this village?"

"No. But there is one who comes here often from a neighboring place. You should just see the crazy exhibition he puts on. You would think the man had gone completely out of his head. But, that is not the biggest news I have for you! They think *you* are a white Angakok!"

"I?" Hans was aghast.

"Yes, I am certain of it." Looking inquiringly at the natives, Aaron indicated the missionary and asked, *"Angakok?"*

Even Hans could quickly discern the assent in their eyes and gestures.

"There you are!" said Aaron. "And while I am not sure, I have the idea that these native Angakoks, especially the one who comes here, are sort of jealous of you, think you are going to steal from them some of their own power. It is always after one of them has been here that I am pestered and teased, and have to defend myself with my fists. The Angakoks seem to resent all white men.

"I am not sure whether they are inciting the natives against us, or whether all the Greenlanders are somewhat distrustful of why we are here. Anyway, the Angakoks wail and howl and make a frightful spectacle of themselves. You'd almost expect them to froth at the mouth. They seem to call on some evil spirit by the name of *Tongarsuk*. It takes a man more clever than I am to understand it all, Pastor."

"I think you have done remarkably well," said Hans.

Hans insisted on spending the night alone with the natives in the same hut in which he had spent that first memorable night. He was pleased to observe that there was less suspicion of him this time, that they appeared more friendly. Aaron had surely made progress as a good-will ambassador.

Several of the men sat about on the platform eating hunks of raw meat which they had torn from the large piece of seal flesh hanging from the ceiling. One of them in what Hans quickly interpreted as a gesture of hospitality, cut a chunk, and, licking the dirt off it with his tongue, handed it to the missionary.

The very sight of the meat was repellent. But this was no time to be squeamish, and risk offending.

He ate. And while he almost vomited, he exulted to see that his eating of their food pleased his hosts.

Long after the Greenlanders had dozed off to noisy slumber, Hans lay praying for them. The modesty that was so inherent a part of his own nature was completely lacking in those who lay sprawled naked about him. They felt no shame over merely being nude while they slept or sat about the warm house; it was as natural to them as modesty was for him. Dirt and filth was something they accepted as something as much a part of their living as seal meat and blubber.

Only the light of the gospel could lift them to a higher plane of living, could free them of the shackles of superstition and fear, bring them an understanding of cleanliness and sanitation, a life holding more than just a fierce struggle for creature existence.

Finally, although nauseated from the fecal odors and the extreme humidity of the close quarters, Hans fell asleep. He was sure he had not slept but a short time when he was awakened by the frenzied beating of a drum and the screaming, strident voice of an evil-looking man squatted on the platform not far from him.

Hans did not stir. He lay as though he did not see or hear. But his heart quaked within him as he heard anger and malevolence mount in this Angakok's screeching.

Quickly, as though a new mood had seized him, the witch doctor stopped his screaming, began to mumble and mutter in an undertone. He garbled an uncanny incantation while the taut skin of his clumsy drum vibrated incessantly. Then again the voice grew in intensity, reached a high pitch, and quavered as though in lamentation and desperate appeal.

For Hans *Tongarsuk* was the only recognizable word in all the Angakok's jargon. More readily recognized and understood was the one brief glance the amulet-covered wizard cast upon him, a look of searing hatred and blind suspicion, the unrestrained fury of a darkened mind.

As suddenly as he had begun, the Angakok stopped his clamor.

But a new ferment of wailing, howling and groaning now rose from all over the room. With a wild look in her eyes, a woman stood up and quenched the firelight sputtering upon one of the soapstone lamps. A moment later, the other two lights were out and darkness engulfed.

Chapter 6

FOR MORE THAN two hours, the baleful din continued in the darkness. Hans felt a measure of relief that he could sit with his back against a corner of the hut.

Finally, the clamor ceased, and there was only the sounds of slumber.

For Hans there was no more sleep. He sat quietly pondering the possible meaning of what he had witnessed until an old crone lit the seal oil in a lamp. He watched her eat a grisly piece of meat, then seat herself to chew on a sealskin. The odd, long coil of black hair, pulled tightly up from her partly bald head, agitated slightly with the workings of her jaw, as her worn teeth gnashed the urine-soaked seal hide to make it more pliable.

Not far from her, the old Angakok lay, worn from his incantations and spent emotion. Disheveled hair straggled over his face. The lines about his wrinkled mouth were hard. Looking soberly at the sleeping man, Hans read in the sagging, creased countenance ignorance, superstition, fear and distrust, a low cunning.

Awaiting daylight, Hans recalled that day in February when the colonists had first glimpsed the return of the

sun. For days there had been but a faint glow of light at noontime, a glow that brightened with each new day. Then what rejoicing in all hearts as the sun shone over the rim of the horizon! As the orange ball burst into view, the northern heavens blued, the mountain peaks tinged with cerise, the dark clouds were brushed faintly with pink.

The coming of the sun had filled the colonists with such joy as though the ship had come to them from Norway! Hans knew a brief ecstasy as he gazed upon the splendor of light. In his Nordland parish he had seen this same sight each winter, but here it was an even greater thrill in having the sun come back. Perhaps it was because he had found the winter so bitterly cold and cursed with demoniac winds; the months of darkness had been filled with uncertainties, the anxiety of having sufficient food until new provisions arrived, and his own impatience to break down the barrier of speech which separated him from these natives.

A few of them now stirred. Some stood up, dressed to go outside. But most of them continued sleeping, weary from the excitement of the night. Now and then a baby whimpered and was quickly given its mother's breast.

They loved their children, these Greenlanders. Aaron had reported that he never saw a child punished. They played contentedly with caribou hooves and bones, remnants of skins, chewed some meat whenever they desired. There seemed no restrictions placed upon them.

Their greatest joy was to imitate their elders. The boys played with small dog whips, with make-believe kayaks and harpoons. The girls built small huts after the clumsy manner of their mothers, or fashioned scraps of skin into clothing.

Suddenly, as he lay there, Hans realized that he loved

these people. Filthy, ignorant, superstitious though they were, he loved them! Somehow, they were like children to him, children to be taught, children to be lifted up and out of their filth and ignorance and superstition.

The sunlight seeped at last through the small bladder-covered windows and all were once again awake. The Angakok slipped quietly out of the house, with but a glowering glance in the direction of the missionary.

For the milling throng that remained, there seemed no remembrance of the emotional orgy of the night before. There was joviality, good nature, and great appetite for the raw meat and blubber.

Hans joined his men, hungry only for Gertrude's cooking.

Toward the end of March, Aaron returned to Good Hope. His hosts he explained, had simply left him. They had not been unwilling that he should accompany them, as they went northward on their summer trek of hunting and fishing. Arok and a few of the younger fellows had even encouraged him to come along, urged him to build himself a kayak.

"But I decided," said Aaron, "that I had better not let them know how clumsy I would be in one of those skittish kayaks, or what a miserable hunter I'd prove to be. There is nothing that Greenlanders respect so much as the skillful hunter."

"Tell me, Aaron," said Hans. "Did you see much of that Angakok?"

"Yes, he was there every once in a while. And I think I have learned what all his crazy incantations are about. The Greenlanders have been afraid of us, even though they may not admire us so highly. Their name for us seems to be *Kablunak,* but I am certain, almost, that they

speak of other Kablunaks, some that have been killed, it seems."

"Some that have been killed? Our people? The Norsemen from Viking times?" Hans' heart beat high with excitement.

"I cannot say, Pastor. But I am sure that these Greenlanders have feared that we are here to seek revenge for those other Kablunaks. So they have appealed to their Angakoks to get help from their Tongarsuk, help to drive us away, or, at least, help in the form of some evil spirit that would drive us from their country. I don't think the people themselves plan to do us any harm."

"Oh, Aaron," cried Hans, a great new hope surging in his heart, "do you think that these Kablunaks of which they speak could be our Vikings? Perhaps our people are within reach! In Denmark, and in Norway, I heard stories of how our countrymen in the Western Settlement were killed or driven out, how some escaped to the Eastern Settlement. We must lose no time in asking your Greenlander friends for more information."

"But," said Aaron, with finality, "we cannot find them now. They have already gone far north. They will return when cold weather comes."

"But summer, the warm months, that is the time when we could explore." There was desperation in Hans' voice.

"Yes, I know. I tried as hard as I could to learn just what they meant. I just could not get real satisfaction from them. Perhaps I have misinterpreted them entirely. Perhaps they do not mean other Norwegians. Perhaps they meant the Dutch traders who come ashore. Who knows?"

While spring came with a robust resurrection of green upon the hills and mountains about Good Hope, it brought with it for Hans Egede a resurrection of his

hope and belief that somewhere the Vikings lived in Greenland.

He rejoiced to see that spring brought for Gertrude a release from the humdrum life she had known through the long winter months. While she never mentioned it to him, Hans knew that her heart yearned homeward to her family and relatives in Bergen; she was one who could never completely sever the ties of her home. Added to her separation from kinsmen was her separation from women; for her there was no one to chat with about recipes, no one with whom to share housewifely problems and joys.

But Greenland spring gave to Gertrude with a lavish hand something which she cherished, loved almost with passion, flowers. Now in every possible spare moment, she rambled gleefully over the grass-soft hillsides with Kristine and Solveig and helped them find the first yellow blossoms snuggled in the grass.

As the days of the midnight sun lengthened, anemones held their cups of yellow to catch the sunbeams. Poppies flushed the shores of the fjord. Bumblebees buzzed about the fuzzy catkins of the willows in a little glade on the island. Cream-colored bells of bloom clung to the Arctic heather.

White avens were like large snowflakes scattered in mountain meadows. Purple saxifrage drifted fragrance alongside melting snowbanks. The month of June saw meadows and glens scarlet and yellow with flowers.

While the beauty of the flowers refreshed Hans, as it did his family, and though he allowed himself time for an occasional hike up the mountain sides with his children, Aaron's news about the Kablunaks ever haunted him.

Almost daily through the month of April, the long and

slender kayaks and the large umiaks paddled by. The kayaks, Aaron explained, were men's boats, used for hunting the seal, the walrus and even the whale. The umiak was a "woman-boat"; no self-respecting hunter would deign to ride in the umiak except when necessity required its use in towing a whale ashore. The umiak was large, constructed much like the conventional rowboat of the Europeans and could hold as many as twenty and thirty adults. It was used chiefly for the transportation of goods, of women, children and decrepit old men.

Often the kayaks and umiaks landed at Good Hope. The inquisitive Greenlanders came up to look at the house and the strange men, and especially at the women of Hans' family; they wore dresses, something hitherto unknown to the Greenlanders. Unerringly, they sought the black-garbed missionary himself.

He was the white Angakok. It was apparent to Hans and his men that news concerning him had spread far and wide.

Hans was not content merely to attempt conversation with them, but tried with the few words at his command, to get from them further information about the Kablunaks. They seemed to evade the topic. Yet, while he yearned to make contact with the Vikings if indeed they still existed, his heart burned even more to preach the gospel to these curious ones who came to see him. To give them a fishhook—it was so little to give. Oh, if he could only tell them of the Gift of God, His only begotten Son!

He tried to tell them. He knew no Greenlandic words for God, for love, forgiveness, and salvation. The names of things that could be touched and handled were not so difficult to obtain. But it seemed impossible to learn the terms that denoted the intangibles, it was as though an

unbridgable chasm lay between him and a native expression of eternal values. For the Greenlanders they seemed not even to exist.

It was evident that what he tried to tell them from the Bible was not comprehended. One day as he saw Paul drawing a picture of David and Goliath, he pondered if his son might not again be of help. The natives had shown much interest in the drawings which they had seen when they avidly inspected the colony house.

"Paul, my boy, your drawings, perhaps they can help preach the gospel to the Greenlanders! Perhaps they can understand your pictures better than my garbling of their tongue."

"Oh, Papa, do you think so?" The boy's blue eyes shone with expectancy. "What do you want me to draw? I have here David throwing a stone at Goliath with his sling."

"Well, they might misinterpret that story. First, we must teach them about Jesus. I want to tell how He came to live among men because He loved us. I want to tell them how He healed the sick, how He forgave sins, how He has gone to prepare a place for us in heaven. My boy, do you think you can do it?"

Flecks of doubt clouded Paul's eyes. "Papa, I have never tried to draw a picture of Jesus! I just never felt I should. Nothing I could draw of Him would be good enough."

"Bless you, son, for feeling that way. Nothing the most talented artist in all the world could portray would ever be worthy. He is the altogether Lovely One; no human portrait could picture Him. But that is not what you need try to do. The Lord will understand the purpose of your efforts. Your pictures are to help bring understanding of what He did when He walked upon the earth, then

little by little, we can teach divine truths to the Greenlanders as our understanding grows between us."

"Should I draw a picture of Jesus giving the blind man sight?"

"Yes, I think that would be a good one."

Hans hovered near his son as the picture grew upon the precious sheets of paper that Paul had brought with him from Norway. When at last it was completed, the boy looked at it critically.

"Papa, it does not seem right. Jesus looks just like an ordinary man, and He should look very special," he said.

"A halo around the Lord's head. Try that."

The next day when a group of natives landed on the Island of Good Hope, curious to see the White Angakok, Hans was more eager than ever to see them. After they had looked about the house, Hans induced them to sit down so that he might talk to them.

Haltingly, groping for words in the strange language, he told them the story of Paul's picture of the blind man. Told them of how Jesus healed the sick, the blind, and the halt. How He had come from Up There to live with men.

For the first time, Hans perceived in the natives a genuine interest in what he was telling them. The dark eyes lighted. Some of the men asked questions. Hans did his best to answer the few questions he understood.

It was the story told by the picture that appealed most to them. They were pleased when Hans told the story a second time. The healing of Christ, this seemed the one fact that they comprehended.

Then to Hans' amazement, one of them stood up. He pulled off his timiak and bared the skin of his chest and stomach. With a wry face, he stroked his stomach.

"Iarpok! Iarpok!" he cried.

The word was not familiar to Hans, but Paul, hearing it, said, "Papa, he means that his stomach is bad; he is sick. I think he is asking you to heal him, like Jesus healed the blind man."

Consternation filled Hans. Gravely, the sick man appealed with his eyes. Again and again, he rubbed his belly. Finally, he made it clear by gestures that he desired the missionary to breathe upon him!

Compassion for the man, his great desire to be kind and helpful momentarily eclipsed Hans Egede's common sense; praying earnestly, he stooped, breathed upon the man, and was rewarded by a smile of gratitude.

Chapter 7

AFTER THE SICK man and his friends had packed their skin tents into the umiaks and disappeared around the bend on their northward trek, Hans went out to meet Aaron returning with other men from a fishing trip. They brought home a good catch of salmon and codfish.

While Hans rejoiced with them over the fish, he was privately troubled and anxious to speak to Aaron. He told him about how he had breathed upon the sick man.

"Well," said Aaron, "they think you are an Angakok, you know. Their own Angakoks claim to heal the sick by frightening the evil spirits out of them with all their skulduggery and noise; then they breathe the spirit of good health back into the sick person."

"So that is it," said Hans thoughtfully. "I didn't know what to do. The man wanted me to do it so badly, and I could see no real harm in obliging him. Yet it seemed like it might be some sort of hocus-pocus. I certainly do not want them to think that I make use of Angakok practices. They must learn that I depend on the Lord, not on my own powers."

"They think you are an Angakok mostly, I think, because you preach to us and we listen respectfully to what

you tell us. They respect the words of their Angakoks. I think you should be happy, Pastor, that they do respect you; although I can well understand that you do not care to be classed with their deceiving Angakoks."

While Hans had almost daily opportunity to preach to the natives, to show them the pictures Paul industriously prepared, he was relieved that he was not again asked to breathe upon any of his hearers. His heart warmed as he beheld wonder and interest in the slanting eyes as he told the Greenlanders of the miracles of Christ. Slowly, he felt himself growing in ability to make himself understood.

As he watched them go on their way to northern hunting grounds, he wondered if he would ever see them again. How many would return this way to hear the gospel again? How many of those who had lived in the winter homes on the near-by mainland would come back to the same huts? What little he had been able to tell them about Christ was so inadequate; he knew that they could not begin to comprehend what he tried to tell them.

Oh, that he might make one Greenlander convert to Christ! Would the day ever come when he could baptize one of these people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Excitement flooded the little colony on a late April day when a Dutch whaling vessel dropped anchor in the waters of Hope Sea. The captain came ashore, and heartily greeted the missionary and his men. He was amazed to learn that the Norwegians had spent the entire winter in Greenland. For himself, the captain declared, it was accomplishment enough that he had been able

to make thirteen trading trips to Greenland during the season when shores were green and spangled with flowers.

The Norwegians, in turn, were surprised to see how the Dutch whaling vessel attracted the umiaks, how willingly the women traded walrus tusks and caribou hides and blubber and sealskin. They had been unwilling to barter with the colony merchant, had even scorned the goods he had offered them. The Norwegians saw now that the goods the Dutch offered were of a type that appealed to the practical hunting people, sharp knives and large needles suitable for sewing skins and tough hides.

During May, few natives passed by. Apparently most of the Eskimos had already gone north.

While their elders looked wistfully for the appearance of the provision ship from Norway, the Egede children found much pleasure in jaunts up into the mountains of the island. Daily, they brought huge bouquets of wild flowers to Gertrude. Often they tried to catch an Arctic bunny to make of it a pet.

The colony provisions dwindled as the weeks of waiting dragged by. Many times hopes were aroused as white sails appeared out upon the ocean. But always the mastheads were those of trading and whaling vessels going farther north. Sometimes there were several in one day.

The crew of the *Hope* and the men who had been hired by the Bergen trading company to go with Hans Egede as colonists had not been chosen for their piety or Christian character. While there were several like Halvor and Aaron who spared no effort to help the missionary, a considerable number of the men were indifferent, a few even hostile, to the spiritual purposes of the colony. Not the least of Hans' burdens through that long winter had been the sharp antagonism of the acri-

monious ones who missed no opportunity to sledge Hans for every discomfort and difficulty.

They were, however, outwardly obedient to both Hans and the captain. And the captain was not unsympathetic with the pastor's problems.

But when Hans gathered them daily for devotional services, his was the heavy knowledge that he preached to ears that did not hear; he spoke to men of his own race without the impediment of a foreign language, and yet the message of the gospel seemed to return void from their hearts!

The sailors now grew impatient to man the *Hope* on its homeward journey. The captain and the trader hurried preparations for the seagoing. The men who had been hired to remain at the colony refused to stay. They, too, would go home on the *Hope*. It was, they insisted, suicide to do otherwise, the provision ship sent from Norway had surely been wrecked, since it had not yet come.

On May 26, Hans called a meeting of all the men and reluctantly agreed to their demand that the ship should remain only so long as provisions safely warranted. Then all the men could go home.

"But my family and I, we have decided to remain. It was God's will that brought us here. It is, we know, God's will that we stay here and bring the gospel to the Greenlanders. We shall appreciate whatever extra provisions you can leave for us. It would rejoice us should some of you men decide to remain also, but this you must choose of your own will."

To Hans' surprise, six men volunteered to share the dangers of the next year with him. Additional rations of grits, meal, and butter were allotted to them. It was decided that the *Hope* would not sail until the middle of the following month.

June came to deck the land in all the glory of an Arctic summer. Long days of sunlight caused plants to burgeon with an almost tropic growth.

Hans looked upon the pleasant land and loved it. He remembered the terror of cold and wind in winter darkness, and could hardly believe that here were the same mountains clad in verdure and warmth.

For himself he could brave the rigors of another winter, face the danger of starvation. But his children! Could he watch them, faint from hunger, sicken and die? Had he the right to make innocent children suffer? Had he a right to endanger their lives? Should he not send his family home? Home, where his children and Gertrude could be spared the hardships and privations of Greenland winters? Home, where his wife could know the comforting companionship of her own kin and friends?

He was torn with indecision as the days neared when the *Hope* would set sail for the homeland, where food, warmth and clothing would be assured for his family. Earnestly, he besought Gertrude.

She looked at him with indignation.

"No, Hans, I am not leaving. I am not taking the children home to Norway. I shall not pack a scrap of goods in our trunks to go back to Bergen! We struggled together to come here, here we stay together, Hans. The Lord will take care of His own!"

On June 6, another meeting of the colonists was held. It was decided that the *Hope* should wait another fourteen days, then sail.

Despair and unrest haunted Hans. How little he had accomplished in this entire year! Not a soul won for Christ! He did not know their language sufficiently to preach to the natives. Trade with them had been negli-

gible, and upon the success of the trading depended the very continuance of the mission station! Had he even won the confidence and friendship of the Greenlanders?

"They will learn to love you, Hans! They will love you. In God's good time, they will love you."

Gertrude would not hear him commiserate.

"*I* like the Greenlanders," said little Solveig. "They are nice to us even though they don't wash themselves."

It was true, Hans reflected, the natives had always shown special consideration and kindness toward his children. One of the women had brought a pair of beautifully decorated kamiks for Paul, and he had been exultant. The flabby-fleshed old woman had gone home feeling amply rewarded after seeing Paul pridefully draw on the sealskin boots.

"I want to stay," said Paul. "I don't want to go back to Bergen to live. I'd rather live in Greenland and learn to hunt like the Greenlanders."

"So would I," agreed Nils.

"You see, Papa," said Gertrude, "your family is very content to stay!"

In the days that followed, all final preparations were made for the sailing of the *Hope*. Hans sometimes heard his wife openly chiding those whom she saw packing, chiding them for their lack of faith, for their undoing of the work that had begun. She steadfastly told them that the ship would come—of that she had no fear. Who but God was ruler of the universe? He would bring them the provisions they needed for His work here!

The trader's face leered with derision as she stood beside him and watched him pack his goods.

"You will unpack what you are so carefully laying away, Herr Olson!"

Chapter 8

THE SILENCE OF the night was broken only by the distant echo of a glacier casting its "calves" into the sea. The auks were quiet now, settled for the brief night on their nests upon the precipitous cliffs of the island farther out toward the ocean. Once when Hans had been rowing near this island, he had watched Greenlanders scaling the granite ledges piled high above the surface; there they robbed the auk nests of their eggs, while clouds of the docile birds fluttered above the egg-stealing invaders.

Eager for any change or supplement to their diet, the colonists also now robbed the nests. They would have to learn many of the ways of the natives if they were to continue to live here without additional provisions from Norway.

Hans and Gertrude often lay talking long after the children dropped off to sleep. Was the Lord testing their faith by withholding the ship? Would they have to cast themselves upon the mercy of the natives, adopt their food and many of their ways in order to survive? Would that they could have as much confidence in the good will of the Greenlanders as did their children! The

Greenlanders, little Kristine would assure them, were their good friends—they would never let the white people starve. But, of course, they would have to be careful to wash any of the food the Greenlanders brought.

Hans was glad that a wall shut his family from the quarters of the men. Though the cursing, the ribald stories, the maledictions against himself could be heard through the walls, still one did not have to look upon the faces of the accusers.

There came the sound of footsteps now, the quick footfalls of running. Lars Rikustad was on watch on the hilltop nearby, on watch for the Norway ship.

The door of the colony house burst open and Lars shouted, "Men, men talking Norwegian, they are coming in a rowboat!"

As though thrown from their beds, the men sprang out of the house. Hastily, Hans pulled on his clothes. Gertrude slipped to her knees beside the bed, tears of joy flowing down her cheeks as she offered thanks.

"Oh, my Sarah! My Sarah!" He knelt there beside her in fervent gratitude before joining Lars, who waited impatiently for him outside the door.

In the bright glow of the Midnight Sun, Hans excitedly watched the boat reaching shore while shouting colonists and sailors rushed into the water to seize it.

What tumult of rejoicing! The first man to step ashore was the skipper who had been on the *Hope's* companion ship and that had returned to Norway the previous summer. A robust, good-natured fellow, he wrung the missionary's hand and cried, "We found you! At last we found you!"

For some minutes, it was impossible for Hans to get any real information. There was little else but backslapping, handshaking and boisterous greetings.

When Gertrude appeared, the men calmed into respectful silence. Here was a woman of gentle breeding yet one who dared brave the hazards of a Greenland winter. She invited the newcomers into the house, set before them the best of her meager rations. While the hungry guests refreshed themselves, the skipper told his story.

Ice had hampered the movements of their ships. For the past eight days the two ships had lain surrounded by pack ice. One of them had been rammed by an iceberg, and the captain had not dared proceed farther without repairs. So the skipper and a few volunteers had set out to reconnoiter and had finally come upon Good Hope.

Yes, instead of but one ship, there were two! And plentiful provisions for the colony. The King was more zealous than ever for the mission's continuance. The Bergen merchants were earnestly desirous of furthering their undertaking in Greenland. The Mission College at Kjobenhavn wrote Hans that King Frederick IV had imposed a "Greenland Tax" in both Denmark and Norway to support the mission and that already a considerable amount of money had been raised.

Welcome news for the homesick colonists was the fact that new colonists had been sent to replace them and that they were, therefore free to return to Norway.

Hans wept unashamedly to hear all the glad tidings. The news from the homeland was, however, like a rebuke to the men who had scoffed at the missionary and his wife. They behaved like chastened children. The trader stood before Gertrude and said humbly, "You were right, Fru Egede. I shall unpack what I so carefully put away."

She smiled at him. "The Lord never fails," she said quietly.

Two days later, the laden ships anchored in the gentle waters of Hope Sea and their treasure of provisions was

unloaded from their holds. There was timber for more dwellings! Gertrude was moved most of all by the sight of it. She cried for joy at the prospect of once again having the privacy of her own house. Sharing the colony house with all the men had been the sorest part of her year's trials.

It was with a measure of relief that Hans and Gertrude watched the *Hope* unfurl her sails, and, tugged by the wind, disappear from sight. There would be no sea-loving, adventurous sailors imprisoned within the walls of a single house throughout the next long Arctic night of winter! This year there would be only those men to live at Good Hope who had come for a purpose, to help with the trade, to further establish the mission.

With the *Hope* went Hans Egede's report to King Frederick. He had included the little information Aaron had garnered from the natives concerning the Kablunaks. He explained that it was his own personal opinion that somewhere in Greenland the Norse settlements of Viking days still existed.

While the two provision ships were anchored in Hope Sea, the captain decided to go with Hans on a trip of exploration farther up the great fjord the Greenlanders called "Ameralik." Hans felt that a more suitable location for the colony would be on the mainland and so decided to search for a likely place. It was also possible, he felt, that they might stumble upon some evidence of Norse habitation since it was believed the Viking settlements were in this same latitude.

The sailors, glad for the opportunity to explore a wilderness, accompanied Hans and the captain. They boated up the fjord, past the ravine-scarred cliffs and met an iceberg newborn from a glacier and on its way to the ocean. As they paddled up the narrowing fjord the cap-

tain, beholding the majestic mountains rising precipitously from the fjords, exclaimed, "It is a beautiful land, this Greenland of yours, so much like Norway."

"Yes," said Hans, "it is a beautiful land. It is pleasant in summer, but the winters are not the gentle winters of our homeland!"

They stopped to inspect the deserted native village where Aaron had tarried the previous winter. The roofs were off the houses now, and the cleansing sun shone down into the interiors. The men entered one of the huts which had a bed platform made of stone instead of driftwood.

"Do you mean to tell me," said the captain, "that they sleep and sit on that big bench of stone?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Hans, "I have slept there myself and it was comfortable. They had spread much grass upon it, then skins and hides. I slept there with from forty to fifty other people of all ages and sizes."

While the captain and his men stared about the hut in amazement, Hans went on, "You know, these Greenlander beds remind me of a phrase from the Bible, for the Greenlander father can truly say, 'My children are with me in bed.' They certainly are. And his neighbor's children, too, for two and three families lived together in this one house."

"It seems incredible to me," exclaimed the captain.

"That I can understand. I had to see it myself before I could believe it. But the worst part of it is the bad air; for fresh air usually gets in only by accident. When the weather outside is temperate, the Greenlanders may open a hole in the roof about as large as your fist, and how the steam pours out! The stench and filth in a Greenlander hut—that, too, you must experience before you can believe it!"

Farther up the fjord, Hans caught sight of a skin tent squatting beside a tiny grove of bright-leaved birch, and, sitting on a skin spread before the tent, was a young mother brooding over a little child. As his boat approached, the Greenlander father came running down to the shore and motioned to the black-robed[1] missionary to come to him.

The man was plainly distressed. He wanted help from Hans. The captain and his men remained in the boat, while Hans followed the distraught man up to the tent and saw that the child was very ill. Hopefully, the young mother bared the breast of the feverish little boy and the father implored Hans to lay his hands upon his son and breathe upon him.

After Aaron's explanation of the Angakok custom of breathing the spirit of good health into the sick, Hans had determined not to acquiesce should further such requests be made of him. But now when he desisted, the parents became frantic in their appeal.

They loved their little boy. He was the only child. The father went into the tent and came bringing a piece of blubber and a walrus tusk. He pressed them on Hans as pay if only he would breathe upon the child.

Earnestly, Hans explained that no pay would be required, that he himself had no power to heal but that the Lord God Up There alone could heal. And he would ask Him for the healing of their boy.

Fervently, the young father insisted on the breathing until at last, Hans bent over the little sufferer, but prayed as he did so.

Gratitude all but transfigured the young father.

Then he asked Hans to go with him for a short distance along the shore.

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[1] Danish law required a minister to wear clerical garb in public.

Signaling to his friends in the boat to follow, Hans went with the Greenlander.

Lying upon the grass, alone beside his miserable skin tent, was one of the most pitiful sights Hans had ever beheld. The man was covered with sores and scabs of leprous appearance.

Hans knelt beside the man, told him of the Great Physician Who answers prayers. He asked him to pray, and stumblingly, the tortured fellow obeyed. Then with eyes imploring, he beseeched the missionary to breathe upon him.

Unwillingly, Hans acceded, leaving it to the Lord to forgive if he did wrong, and praying that the man be granted deliverance from his suffering.

When Hans rejoined his companions, the party penetrated farther up the great fjord than he had ever been. Many miles from Good Hope they entered a smaller fjord; and they saw the serrated, glistening wedge of ice that was but one tiny finger of the great Inland Ice. Adventurously, the men clambered up the glacier. They did not go far before they discovered that it was but a part of a mammoth sheet of ice. Years later, Hans was to learn that this was but a tiny portion of the ice cap that permanently covers four-fifths of Greenland's surface, a frozen sea thousands of feet thick, scarred with crevasses that have swallowed men forever. Birthplace of the satanic foehn winds hurtling down from the interior at more than a hundred miles per hour. Barren wastes where mirages and snow blindness stupefy the unwary who dare enter its domain. Petrifying cold which in winter drops to 85 below zero and a man's breath crackles as it is expelled.

Shortly after the return to Good Hope, the two Bergen ships proceeded northward to engage in trading before

setting out for Norway. The colony of Good Hope was left alone to wait another year before there could be provisions and news from home. But Hans was not unhappy. The mission was to continue! Perhaps within this very year he could know the joy of winning a convert for Christ.

In early August, three umiaks arrived at the colony, vanguard of the natives returning southward for the winter. Hans did not recognize any of the women and children who tumbled out of the clumsy boats, but the mothers lost no time asking him to breathe upon their sick children. Manifestly, news of the White Angakok had traveled even as the Greenlanders went far and wide in their hunting.

Hans rejoiced that at least through their requests he was given opportunity to preach to them. He made use of Paul's drawings and noticed that the strangers listened to his words with respect and interest.

With morning, they were gone.

Through the months of August and September, the waters of Hope Sea carried many kayaks and umiaks going southward. To Hans' great delight, a band of natives, a few of whom he had known the previous winter, came to the Island of Good Hope and began to repair the old winter huts there.

When they asked him whether the white men objected if they took up quarters there again, Hans felt unable to express how truly welcome they were. He brought them gifts from his new stores as token of the good will he held for them.

On the evening of September 29, one of the natives from these houses came to him asking that he come and breathe upon one of their sick.

Hans found the man to be close to death. And over and over, relatives and friends urged the missionary to breathe upon the dying man. Hans tried to explain that there could be no value in his breathing upon the man, that miraculous healing was only of the Lord.

He would pray for the sick man. That was all that he could do.

But the distraught people were adamant. They would not rest until Hans bent over the almost unconscious man and breathed upon him.

Word came the next morning that the man was dead.

Chapter 9

FULLY EXPECTING THAT the natives would blame him for the death of the sick man, Hans returned to visit them as soon as the news reached him. To his great relief, there were no indications of distrust or ill feeling.

There was no mention by name of Kunak, the dead man, even by his wife. The relatives might point to the body where it lay ready for its journey up to the mounds of stone, or they might indicate him with their hands—all of this covertly—but they would not speak his name, and they seemed alarmed when Hans did so.

He tried to tell them of the resurrection of the dead, of the risen Saviour. They were quick to understand how that those who died would live again. They told him that always, when a man knew he was going to die, he dressed in his best so that he would be nicely outfitted when he reached the New World. And his friends would be sure to place his fishing and hunting equipment beside his body.

Hans went with them up the hillside to bury Kunak. When the mourners began walking in such devious ways, sometimes even going away from their ultimate desti-

nation, he made bold to ask why they did not go straight to the grave.

They must mislead the evil spirits, they explained, confuse them, then they would not find their way back to the house of Kunak.

On an October day, Augo, a man from the local village, came to Egede's house.

The *Pelesse* must come at once. Augo's son lay sick.

Pelesse—"the preacher"—"the maker of words." Hans was no longer known to his neighbors as a white Angakok. Somehow, they had realized that he claimed no powers of magic, that he had come to their land only to tell them of a Great Spirit, one greater than Tongarsuk.

In Augo's warm hut, the little brown lad lay twisted with pain. Hans laid his hand tenderly upon the perspiring brow and spoke soothingly. He looked about him at the worried parents and family. How they loved their children!

The preacher must breathe upon the boy, breathe into him the spirit of good health, so that the boy could grow strong and become a valiant kayaker who would kill the walrus and the bear.

Hans groaned inwardly at hearing this request, but calmly told them of Jesus, a name that was now familiar to them. How He had healed the blind, the man who could not walk, the lepers. How He could heal Augo's little boy, too, it was not the preacher who had such powers. The preacher could not blow good health back into the fevered child.

But if they prayed believing in the Lord Jesus, all things were possible. Would they pray with him for this little boy's recovery?

They bowed their heads as he did, covered their faces

with their hands as they saw him do. And Hans heard, with a glory in his heart, the fervent prayers from Greenlander tongues!

When Hans finished praying, Augo asked him to remain beside his son and continue praying until he should be well. But Hans assured the father that he would continue to pray for the boy in his own home and left the little hut.

The next morning, Augo's radiant face appeared in the Egede doorway. His little boy no longer perspired! He was almost well. Now Augo and his friends believed all the preacher had told them about the Creator, about the God who could heal, about the Lord who loved both the Greenlanders and the people of the preacher's race. The preacher must come now to see how strong already the boy was!

For some time, Hans had come to realize that only through close association, by living day after day with the natives could he fully learn to understand the Greenlanders and their language. Aaron had returned to Norway, where his betrothed awaited him. Halvor and Lars had gone home to their families. The colonists who were with him now were all new, totally unacquainted with the Greenlandic tongue. Only his own little men, Paul and Nils, could be of real help in further conquering the difficult language.[1]

The thought of sleeping night after night, of daily subsisting on the unclean food, of being exposed to their immodest habits, all this was abhorrent to a man of Hans Egede's tastes and principles. But he knew that he could

[1] Present-day missionaries study the language four years before gaining sufficient fluency for their work. Greenlandic has many guttural sounds difficult for a foreigner to master. By means of compounding, a single word will express what in other languages would require an entire sentence. Variations in the tone of voice used will change the meaning of words.

not allow his own personal comforts or standards to postpone the bringing of salvation to the Greenlanders.

Nils and Paul would not hesitate to live with the natives. Their youthful exuberance and adaptability would quickly help them over their natural aversions to the Greenland mode of living.

But did he want his sons to become accustomed, not only to the unclean food and odors, but to the promiscuous sexual relations that existed in the squalid huts?

When he discussed the subject with Gertrude she made no objection to the boys' going.

"Hans," she said, "as we look upon them, there is much sin among the Greenlanders. Yet can we say that these unenlightened people are immoral? Are they not, instead, unmoral? It is what we can expect among a people who do not know Christ as their Saviour.

"I know, from what you have told me, that our boys would see everyday what would be scandalous among a people whose civilization is based on Christian principles. But it is useless to shield our boys from the sin they are bound to see among the natives. They must be taught to see, and to withstand like good soldiers of Christ. Talk to the boys, Hans. They will understand. I know they will not fail you."

Hans talked with his teen-age sons. At first mention of this contemplated stay with the Eskimos, the boys were enthusiastic. Playmates they had already among the Greenlander boys—Olabi and Eskias and Tukajak. They were teaching Nils and Paul how to crack dog whips. With his whip, Olabi could flick a pebble off a stone a dozen feet away.

It was true, also, that the native boys teased the blond fellows and good-naturedly derided them because they were so awkward in Eskimo skills and games.

The more they talked about it, the more realistic the boys became. Living with the Greenlanders meant subsisting on their fare, not on Mama's excellent cooking. Seal meat and blubber, walrus meat and blubber, no hot porridges, roasts, or stews. Bread was unknown among the Greenlanders, only flesh and fat was their portion. At the Egede house, Olabi and Eskias and Tukajak had crunched the Norwegian flatbread into their mouths and told Nils and Paul that some day when Augo and the other fathers killed a whale, they would bring them the delicious *matak,* the hide of the whale. At another time, Gertrude had given the native boys sweet-tasting *sandbakkels* and *fattigmand,* and Eskias assured her that nothing could be as wonderful as a heaven where there was an unfailing supply of *fattigmand* to eat.

He was not absolutely sure, Paul said, but it seemed that some of their playmates were hosts to tiny crawling parasites.

"Lice, Papa, I think they have lice!"

Long and earnestly, Hans talked to his sons. He told them frankly of all that they might witness during the days and nights they would live with Olabi and Eskias and Tukajak.

Shortly afterwards, father and sons went the short distance to the neighboring huts. Jovial welcome was accorded the two white boys, but there was less hospitality shown the preacher.

When a late rain caused the roof of his hut to leak and water dripped down upon the motley household, Augo, reasoning logically, wondered why the preacher should leave a house that did not leak to stay in one that did. What motive impelled a man to leave comfortable quarters for those that were miserable in comparison?

It was the best way, Hans explained, for him to teach them more about the Creator. Surely he could not explain about the Lord Jesus if he remained in his own house. Indeed, it was for this blessed purpose that he had left his homeland and come to theirs.

Paul and Nils adjusted themselves to the new life with much less difficulty than did their father. Hans was all but ill continually from the disagreeable air and food. On the third night of their stay, as he lay down to sleep, he remembered that time nearly a year ago when he had spent his first apprehensive night in a Greenland home. Now he had no fear that his hosts would do him harm. They were his friends.

He had but reached deep sleep when Olabi's father, slipping in, aroused him, asked him to come with him to the house where Nils and Paul were staying. Panicky with dread of what might be awaiting him, Hans followed.

But as soon as he parted the sealskin door, he spied his sons sitting together and obviously unharmed. However, on the platform reserved for the unmarried young men, sat an Angakok. On all sides, the other Greenlanders waited tensely.

The preacher sat down with his sons. Suddenly, the seal-oil lamps were extinguished. He felt Paul and Nils instinctively crowd close to him.

As he became accustomed to the gloom, Hans saw that the witch doctor had taken his place upon the floor. He squatted upon sealskins and drummed upon them with his fingers while he began a mumbled gibberish.

Hans recalled that two strangers had come to the settlement that day, and he was sure one of them was this Angakok. Neither of them had returned his friendly overtures, but instead had maintained a stony indifference.

For more than an hour the low-roofed hut resounded with the screaming, wailing exertions of the Angakok. Alternately he would mumble, be quiet, then break again into a crescendo of babble and shrieks.

Through it all, Hans and his sons were careful to say nothing lest they arouse the open antagonism of the Angakok. When the women ceased the clamor which they, too, had begun, the witch doctor cried out in a loud voice a question which Hans could not discern.

"Pelasse afraid?" asked Augo in an undertone.

Hans replied calmly that he was not afraid, because wherever he was, the Lord was also with him.

"But hear," whispered Augo, "Tongarsuk answers the Angakok!"

From outside the earth walls came the muffled voice of the stranger who had accompanied the Angakok. A high-pitched strident voice, Hans quickly recognized it.

"That is not Tongarsuk," Hans assured Augo, "that is only the Angakok's friend answering him."

Augo looked at him in astonishment, then listened attentively while the Angakok shrieked another question.

Again came the muffled voice, and awe spread over the crowded room.

"Tongarsuk answers," whispered Augo.

"No," Hans declared. Indignant over the trickery of the Angakok, angered at his absurd claims, he spoke so that all in the hut could hear him. "It is not Tongarsuk that answers. It is the Angakok's friend who stands outside and answers. Come, I will show you!"

A snarl of fury lashed out from the witch doctor. Augo had begun to rise at the preacher's invitation, but frightened by the Angakok's appearance, settled back in his place. None of the others stood up to follow the

preacher out through the tunnel. Even Nils and Paul remained.

"Tongarsuk it is," said Augo firmly as the preacher left him.

Cautiously, Hans crept out and surprised the Angakok's skulking companion close beside the hole that was usually opened for ventilation.

Chapter 10

AFTER GOING TO the colony to hold Sunday services, Hans returned to Augo's hut. But in less than a day, he became so ill that he lay down on the platform, covering himself with furs and skins in vain effort to keep out the overpowering stench of rotting fish. When morning came, he felt that he could never force himself to eat another bite of sealmeat.

Disconsolately, he took leave of Nils and Paul, who seemed much better able to endure the insanitation. "Nese" and "Piua" their playmates called them. Husky boys that they were, they had tussled with their shorter-framed friends and gained for themselves a respect that considerably lessened the teasing they had first undergone.

"I'm going to show them that *I* can pick up a pebble with a whip, too," Nils told his father in parting.

As Hans trudged homeward, he realized that he had certain cause for rejoicing. The natives seemed especially interested to hear of the resurrection of the dead. Out of this interest was a growing desire to learn more about heaven and the Creator and His Son. They asked ques-

tions. They had a growing confidence in whatever he told them.

When he bowed his head in thanks over his portion of sealmeat his hosts asked him what he was doing. And he explained that he was thanking the Lord for His provision of food, that it was the Lord who was the giver of all things.

Was He indeed? Was it not Augo who killed the seal, Augo who brought home the bearskin on which he sat, Augo and his friends? Were not they the ones who should be thanked for the meat?

Yes, what they said was true, but it was the Lord God who first created the seal and the bear. He it was who in the beginning created man and gave him dominion over the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, the beasts of the earth.

During Hans' stay, the supply of food in Augo's house had dwindled. There was need for a special hunt. So, before they set forth, Hans prayed for a blessing upon their hunt. Augo and his friends returned with more seals than they had ever before caught. They told the preacher that now indeed they believed that it was the Jesus-God who blessed them.

Yes, Hans reflected, he had even made some further progress with the language during this brief stay.

But his constitution was not such that he could continue to endure the life in Augo's hut.

Pondering what next to try, Hans thought of the little boy Kojuf, who had steadfastly followed him about and consistently imitated him. Where the preacher went, Kojuf went. What the preacher did, so did Kojuf.

Perhaps he could persuade the boy's parents to let Kojuf come and live with him. He was about the age of Nils; he could be of help with the language.

After a few days in his own clean bed, lovingly nursed by Gertrude, Hans was ready for another sojourn with Augo. He would make another attempt at least, before giving up. Again he found it impossible. Nausea overcame him after only a few hours.

But the little boy Kojuf willingly accompanied him home and promised to stay the entire winter. To this his parents had been agreeable. To Hans' dismay, the cleanliness of the Egede home, and the European food did not appeal to the little Eskimo any more than the Greenland diet had appealed to Hans! After but a few days of unhappy survival in the preacher's house, Kojuf ran home and could never be influenced to return.

Disappointing though his experience with Kojuf had been, Hans felt certain that the wisest solution to the language problem was to bring natives into his own home. Here, unencumbered by illness, he could the better study and teach them.

In Augo's hut lived a widow and her two sons, Rusak and Navia. The boys were older than Nils and Paul, but they had become as friendly with them as Olabi and Eskias and Tukajak were. Their mother readily gave her consent, so Rusak and Navia came along home with Nils and Paul.

"They have much lice, Mama," warned Paul when once again he was in the clean shelter of his own home. "And," he added wearily, "Tukajak rolled too close to me one night when I was asleep, I'm afraid, and he left quite a few of *his* with me!"

Perturbed over this presence of vermin in her house, Gertrude turned to her younger son.

"Nils, how about you?"

"No lice, Mama. I always managed to get in a corner by myself."

Hurriedly, Gertrude asked Hans to get their own sons undressed, and also these foster children. Their clothes must be hung outside to freeze immediately. The four boys must each be thoroughly bathed.

Nils and Paul were eager to scrub from themselves the accumulated blubber grease and dirt of nearly three weeks. But consternation seized Rusak and Navia when they discovered that a plunge in a tub of water, in the wintertime, was to be their lot!

Only Paul's tactful and mischievous coaxing brought them to submit to the outrageous ordeal. Diffidently, the Eskimos dressed in European clothes, but found the buttons quite intriguing.

Hans endeavored not only to learn from the boys, but also to teach them to read and to write in his own language. Perhaps he could train them to become catechists or teachers, to help bring the gospel to their own people!

The boys were not much impressed when the preacher tried to interest them in learning the alphabet. A little amused at these strange patterns, but not interested. Lacking any other motivation Hans offered the boys a fish hook for learning each letter. This incentive brought a gratifying impetus to Rusak and Navia's academic accomplishments. Rapidly, they progressed through most of the ABC's. But when they had earned what seemed to them a more than ample supply of fish hooks, their quest for knowledge lagged.

Exasperated at last, Rusak asked what might be the sense in sitting there staring at a silly book?

Navia was indignant and charged the preacher, "You, you and the merchant, you do not amount to much. You spend your time looking in these foolish books and mak-

ing foolish scratches with a pen. What is the sense in that?"

Encouraged by his partner, Rusak flung out another and heavier taunt at his teacher.

"The Greenlander man, he is *inuit,* he amounts to something. He can hunt. He can kill even a whale. He has a kayak. Even I have killed a seal. That is something the preacher has never done. A great hunter like Augo, he has killed the white bear. Augo brings home walrus and seal and caribou. There is benefit from that. We can eat the meat Augo brings home; we can wear the hides of the animals he kills. But the preacher's books—they cannot be eaten, they cannot be worn. We Greenlanders cannot be bothered with such nonsense as this!"

To appease his dissenting scholars, Hans allowed them to go out on frequent excursions to hunt and fish. When the weather did not permit this, and winter months numbered few days when excursions were feasible, Hans held school. Besides struggling with them over the alphabet and simple words, he taught them about the creation of the world, of the fall of man and of redemption through Christ. This, the boys seemed slowly to comprehend, but there seemed to be no spiritual impact, it was only head knowledge.

One day in December, a pair of Greenlanders, besieged by storm, sought refuge at the Egede house. During their stay, Hans questioned them about what they might know concerning the Kablunaks who had come to their shores in olden times.

The Kablunaks of long ago? Not far up this very fjord of Ameralik, the waters led to another and smaller, Ujaragssuit, and there was the place where the last of the Kablunaks had been killed.

Hearing this, Hans tried hard not to betray his tense feelings. Most Greenlanders were reluctant even to mention the Kablunaks. These two seemed willing to tell what they knew and he did not want them to sense how concerned he was over the Vikings or they might not continue their tale. Now they told him:

In the early years, the Kablunaks and the Greenlanders lived at peace with one another. But the Kablunaks quarreled over a Greenlander woman and, after killing some of the natives and kidnaping this woman, they fled. The revengeful Greenlanders built a large umiak, covering it with glistening white bear skins so that it resembled a piece of floating ice. In this they sailed to the Kablunak farms at Kilarsarfik. The Kablunak on watch was deceived by the appearance of the white umiak and at length retired to his house.

That night the Greenlanders crept stealthily up and surrounded the Kablunak houses, piled fuel about them and set them afire. Most of the Kablunaks perished in the flames. The white chieftain Ungertok, with his young son in his arms, leaped out of a window and escaped. Another Kablunak, the bravest of them all, for he had been the only one who had dared to go out seal hunting, was Big Olav, he was shot as he was returning. Another Kablunak escaped and reached his sailboat safely; and as the east wind bore him out toward the sea, the Greenlanders heard him cry, "Ah, you beautiful wood-clad slopes of home!"

And Ungertok fled, only to be killed at last by an arrow made from a barren woman's hip bone.

Shortly after New Year's Day, 1723, the Egede family were happy to find themselves asked to house and feed an entire family. Evi and Mala had three children, two

small daughters and an older son the age of Nils. Gertrude gave them sleeping quarters in the loft, and set about trying to teach Mala to help her care for the two families.

Evi, a good-natured man, was grateful to find shelter. He was evasive concerning the reason for his sudden need, but he was always co-operative and eager to please the preacher. Mala, too, was congenial. The entire family, however, was exasperatingly accustomed to unhygienic habits.

Despite the crowded conditions, the winter months were far happier than those of the preceding year. There was no bickering and complaining as with the sailors and former colonists. While Evi and his family were not the most desirable of companions, still they provided a real challenge to Hans and his wife. And their wordbook steadily grew with additions.

Rusak and Navia's continued education was weighted with inertia, but Paul and Nils daily absorbed the language of their friends. It seemed to Hans that his boys had been born "with Greenland tongues in their mouths."

With spring, came the usual exodus toward the northern hunting and fishing grounds. As the kayaks and umiaks streamed by, restlessness grappled Rusak and Navia, and one night they disappeared.

Disappointed, Hans considered that his hours of laboring with the slow-learning boys had been in vain. Of marriageable age, they had been, perhaps, too old to win to a new way of life. The experience convinced Hans that much value lay in the teaching of younger natives. He must, therefore, obtain pupils of a more pliant age.

Knowing the carefree ways of the Eskimo, he realized that he would never be able to get the children of the neighborhood to come daily to school at his house. The

only way he could assure regular attendance at lessons was to adopt native orphans and so rear them in his own home. Even if parents were willing that their children should learn, there was the itinerant life of the Greenlanders, a real obstacle. All summer the people journeyed northward from place to place, gypsy fashion; there was no certainty that they would return to the same winter dwellings; generally, there was a constant flux in the population.

Promising to return in the fall, Evi and Mala also prepared for the summer trek in the northlands. They would leave their one son with the preacher—that he might teach them what the "talking skins" had to say. From Rusak and Navia, however, the boy had acquired considerable prejudice against the alphabet and he had little appetite for book learning.

Nevertheless, Hans and Gertrude taught the boy as they daily instructed their own children. While Hans had every reason to believe that the teaching of this native son was to be as fruitless as the teaching of Navia and Rusak, he was determined not to give up. His Greenlander school must become established, even if he must house every one of the slow-plodding pupils in his house. No boy or girl that he could obtain would he ever reject!

Chapter 11

ON HANDS AND KNEES, Hans and his three men followed Nernak across the glacier. The March sun was warm upon their backs, and it melted the surface of the ice sheet so that mittens and knees were soon soaked.

Just beyond the ice sheet, Nernak promised, were the ruins of the old Kablunak dwellings, the homes of the white chieftain Ungertok and his people!

Nearly always when Hans had attempted to gain information about the Vikings from the Greenlanders, they had evaded him, pleading ignorance. He came to realize that this was because they feared the white colonists might seek vengeance for the killing of their countrymen.

Nernak, however, believed Hans when he insisted that his interest was solely a desire to learn more about the Kablunaks, that there was no thought of revenge in his heart; he readily consented to lead Hans to the remains of the old Viking settlement, far up the Ameralik Fjord.

Hans was tense from excitement as bearlike he followed Nernak. The high hope of soon beholding the very houses where the Vikings had lived fired him inside. His parishioners at Vaagen had doubted that there was any

truth in the sagas of Eric and his purported Green Land. Even in Bergen, where stories of trade with the countrymen established at the Eastern and Western Settlements of Greenland were accepted and there were actual records of trade transactions in ivory tusks, blubber and furs, there had been those who had scoffed at the idea that Norwegians had actually lived in the land of the Skrellings.

At last the party was safely across the glacier, and they could walk upright again. Eagerly, Hans scanned the horizon. Only the barren elevation of a plateau lay before him. Was it possible that here he would see with his own eyes the walls of a Viking dwelling?

Slowly, with sogged feet, they made their way up the plateau. They straggled through a rank copse of bushes and small birch trees. Then Hans saw Nernak suddenly climb onto a crumbling ledge of hewn stone. Turning, he said the one word, "Kablunak!"

Trembling with anticipation, Hans mounted beside the Greenlander. Before him was no vision, no mirage. There before him were the hewn stone walls of a chapel! He stood speechless as his men found places along the stone wall that enclosed the churchyard in traditional Norse manner.

"Pastor, it is true! That is no Greenlander building! It is a church, built like the old churches in Norway!"

Yes, here truly was proof indisputable that Norwegians had long ago lived in the Land of the Skrellings!

And had been vanquished!

The men quieted as the pastor reverently entered the church doorway. The walls, he saw, were four feet thick, like the walls of old Trondenes church, in which he had worshiped as a boy. This church, and the loved and familiar one of his childhood, had been built about the

same time, perhaps in the early part of the eleventh century.

A gable, partly fallen, gave evidence of the customary high-pitched roof. At the east end was the place where the altar and pulpit had been, against the blank wall of the gable. All windows were along the south wall.

One of the men, looking out a window, cried out, "There, there is another building—by that clump of brush."

As they all started across the churchyard in the direction of the second ruin, Ludvig Norstad stumbled and fell.

"A gravestone!" he exclaimed.

"Yes. A gravestone!" The feeling that he trod upon holy ground halted Hans for the moment. Stooping, he examined the weathered slab of stone and found rune marks upon it which he could not decipher.

As they approached the second ruin, they came upon what plainly were the remains of a farmyard: the delineations of a sod barn, a sheep enclosure. The house had been built of stone and turf; near it were the walls of what must have been a *stabbur,* the customary storehouse of the Norwegian people. Where cultivated fields had once been, the grass and flowers were already flourishing.

Hans looked out over the plain. Ponderous thoughts weighed his soul. Here in this desolate wilderness, grain fields once spread, cattle and sheep grazed upon the hills. Farther down the moor he spied another enclosure of ruins, another farm where Norsemen tilled the soil, another home where hearts knew love, and the laughter of little children sounded. Centuries before, the walls had heard the cozy chatting of Norwegian housewives baking great round sheets of flatbread.

Hans had steadfastly rejected the notion that the Vikings had been entirely exterminated by the natives. Even the Europeans of the tenth century, when Eric had first settled here, he reasoned, were of a civilization far superior to that of the unenlightened natives. While they were skilled hunters, the native Greenlanders were never a warlike race. But the Vikings had gloried in battle and pillage, their conquering bands invaded Normandy and England; they were warriors ever and a people hard to annihilate. Eric's colonists had been numbered by thousands; for more than four centuries they had prospered in the Green Land and established regular commerce with their countrymen in the homeland.

Yes, here were the ruins of the Viking homes. The Western Settlement, beyond a doubt. There were many more ruins in the vicinity, Nernak said. And the white chieftain Ungertok, had his flight not been toward the Eastern Settlement when he was slain?

The Eastern Settlement—that must be along the eastern coast of Greenland, behind the barrier of pack ice through which the *Hope* and many other ships had been unable to penetrate. There in the Eastern Settlement, Hans' reason insisted, the Norsemen still lived!

As spring laved the land with the radiance of longer days, his belief that his countrymen still dwelt in the Eastern Settlement held. In mid-June the Norway ship arrived, bringing with it a double measure of encouragement for Hans. Besides the store of supplies, there was an assistant for him, the Reverend Albert Top. Moreover, Hans was commissioned by the King to head an expedition to search for possible Viking ruins, particularly of the Eastern Settlement. In Denmark, belief was strong that the descendants of Eric still lived in the Eastern Settlement, that only the white men of the

Western Settlement had been exterminated by the Skrellings.

Hans was confident that the ruins to which Nernak had led him, and others he had later discovered in near-by territory, were the remains of the Western Settlement. To reach the Eastern Settlement the most logical route seemed to be by boat down the western coast, thence around the southern tip of the land and up the east coast. Accordingly, on August 9, he set off with a party of selected men in two of the ship's boats. Along the saw-toothed shoreline they worked their way, their small vessels moving between towering icebergs and often threatened by enmeshing pack ice.

On their third day out, they caught sight of an encampment of Greenlanders upon the verdant lap of an island. Hans, ever ready to befriend the natives, and eager to speak the gospel to them, requested that the expedition stop and camp near them for the night. Weary and cramped from a long day in the boat, the men were glad to go ashore.

The boats beached, they boisterously started up the knoll, beyond which the skin tents were pitched. Hans, busy with the gathering together of his Bible and other needful supplies, was last to leave the boat.

He had but set foot on the rocky shore when horrified shouts from his men halted him. Fear blanched the faces of the unarmed sailors.

Behind them surged a horde of Greenlanders, menacing spears brandished by several of their men. The rest of the mob, men, women and children, clutched stones.

While Hans stood as one transfixed, rocks and stones pelted from the vanguard of the attackers. Out of range of the missiles, the sailors scurried past the missionary and jumped into the boats.

"Pastor! Into the boat—they'll kill us!"

Greenlanders intent on killing? Hans refused to believe it. Yet through his mind flashed the report of an old native woman—how her husband had been kidnaped by sailors from a Dutch trading vessel. And there had been Kabelau and the two other women who were dragged from their tents and taken off to whaling vessels.

This encampment of Greenlanders had recognized these men as sailors, had risen in defense. They were not killers, these Greenlanders; his people they were, the sheep of his flock.

Hans looked up at the approaching mob, unafraid, while stones cast from far up the hill at the sailors rolled to his feet.

As suddenly as the stones had come clattering upon the rocks of the shore, they stopped. Cries of *"Pelesse! Pelesse!"* echoed and re-echoed.

The preacher, the white maker of words, wearer of the black robe, friend of their people!

Not one familiar face could Hans discover as the joyful Greenlanders surrounded him, their stones cast backward as they came.

"Tell us," urged one who bore a spear, "about the One who made us."

Chapter 12

REMEMBERING THE SERVICES of Nernak, Hans was hopeful of finding among this encampment of natives a man who would guide his party directly to the Viking ruins of which, reportedly, there were many here in the southern part of Greenland.

This particular clan of Greenlanders wintered far to the south, and were nearly home now from their summer's trek northward. Doubtless, they were well acquainted with the location of the Kablunak settlements.

But like the natives about Good Hope, they were reluctant to admit to any knowledge of the vanquished Norse. Although not a warring people, revenge and fierce retribution were something all Greenlanders understood. Much as they might love their children, there did not exist deep affection between adults. They lived together, many in one hut, peaceably. Still, Hans had observed, they could be very callous and indifferent concerning the welfare of others. Individual survival was their primary concern. Their wailing long and loud over the death of one of their numbers was not so much from grief as from the fear of evil spirits and frantic endeavor to frighten such away.

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth—this was the moral language they comprehended. But to return good for evil, to turn the other cheek, these concepts of Christian love were alien, Hans knew. And they would continue to be alien until the light of the gospel had illumined their hearts.

At length, after much coaxing, one man agreed to accompany Hans' expedition. With morning light, the party started out again, the guide sitting near the preacher and glancing often toward the little cluster of receding skin tents. Soon, in umiak and kayaks, as soon as the tents could be dismantled, his relatives and friends followed. For an entire day, they paddled behind the white men, then camped on another island.

Often, as Hans and his men continued southward, they were in the midst of a stream of icebergs and "growlers." Not infrequently, their boats were in danger of being crushed between the floes.

One day, they beheld the icy arm of a glacier spawned by the Inland Ice, glistening brilliantly in the slanting sunlight. The sailors had never seen this great ice formation, of which they had heard strange tales, and were eager to see it at closer range. The arm of ice crawling down between green-brown hills dropped into the sea.

Hans and his men were only a short distance from it when a gargantuan slice broke away and fell with a thunderous crash into the sea. Monstrous waves surged out and tossed their boats like scraps of driftwood. Water filled one boat so that it almost submerged. Thereafter, Hans kept a respectable distance from the seagoing glacier.

A few days later, more than a hundred native boats swarmed about the Norse expedition. Seeing a member of their own race in the preacher's boat, the Green-

landers plied him with questions, and Hans heard himself frankly discussed: Yes, these were the Kablunaks. This man in the black gown, it was he of whom they had often heard. This was the *Pelesse,* the maker of words. No, he was not truly an Angakok; he had come to live with the Greenlanders to tell them about the Creator of heaven and earth and of all men.

Truly? They wished to hear him then, to listen to his strange words. They paddled their umiaks and kayaks closer, and Hans stood up in his boat to preach to them of Him who had also preached to crowds from a boat.

Little by little, the guide's fears were dispelled, and he directed Hans into a fjord and on to a pleasant strand where they found the ruins of a number of Viking houses. Farther up a valley, they found an old church. Always, Hans noted, the Vikings had settled along the interior fjords where there was greater protection from storms, where the vegetation and animal life was more plentiful; their example made him all the more desirous to move the colony of Good Hope farther inland.

Along the interior fjords, the natives were eager to barter, offered as many as thirty codfish for a single sewing needle. They brought the white men generous quantities of blueberries and service berries.

When Hans questioned them concerning the Greenlanders who lived on the East Coast, they insisted that they were an inferior tribe. Nothing but cannibals! Hans heard this with some private reservations. He had learned, by this time, that there was the opinion among Greenlanders, also, that the other fellow was always the one who had the most shortcomings. The natives on the East Coast were very likely much like these who spoke so disparagingly of them.

What they told him concerning the difficulty of navi-

gating along the East Coast was more probable. Hans had heard from seafaring men in Bergen and Kjobenhavn of the constant stream of pack ice along the East Coast that made landing there impossible. And well did he remember the day when the *Hope* and its companion vessel had been imprisoned in the ice along that same coast.

Daily they camped, and there was opportunity to preach to the natives. One sunshiny day, the preacher was requested to come ashore on a tiny island where a man had been buried recently. Arriving at the grave, the natives begged him to raise the dead.

As well as he could, Hans explained that it was not in his power to make the dead alive, that it was only the Lord Himself who had such power. He told them of the raising of Lazarus, that Christ had promised to return in glory, to come again from heaven to earth and raise all the dead; then this dead Greenlander would also arise.

When would God's Son return thus?

Earnestly, Hans replied that this was not knowledge that had been given to any man, that Christ had not told of the exact time He should return for His own, but that men should be ready to meet Him any time. Thoughtfully, the Greenlanders went to their boats and sailed away.

Another morning as the Norwegians made ready to start their day's journey, a delegation of Greenlanders arrived in kayaks, a blind man following them in his own kayak.

Would the preacher breathe upon this man's eyes so that again he could see? For the preacher was a follower of the Jesus-God who had healed the blind with only

words and the touch of His fingers. Now, surely, the preacher would speak the magic words of healing!

Again, Hans endeavored to explain that he himself possessed no such miraculous powers, that only God in heaven could heal the blind man. If they prayed, believing, God in heaven granted prayers—even of healing the blind.

Yes, they believed.

And the blind man raised his unseeing eyes toward the preacher and said, "Seraluk believes."

In one of the boats was some brandy. Hans brought some of this and washed the pus from the man's eyes. With compassionate prayers in his heart, he left the blind man to continue sightlessly after his friends.

Oh, that the Lord would heal him! The man, Seraluk, had been so sincere in his profession of faith that the Creator could heal.

Little did Hans know then, that many years later, this same blind man was to come to him with eyes that were bright and seeing.

"The preacher does not know Seraluk?" the brown-skinned one asked.

Hans looked at him, shook his head.

"Does not the preacher remember, many summers ago, when he washed the blind eyes of Seraluk with sharp, stinging water? Does not the preacher remember when he was in the Southland then, and Seraluk's friends and Seraluk begged him to give sight? And the preacher said that if Seraluk believed, then would the Lord God answer prayers for healing. And Seraluk believed. And Seraluk's friends believed. Seraluk was blind, but soon, only a few moons after, Seraluk could see!"

Hans looked questioningly at the man's companions.

Yes, this was he. This was the blind man whose eyes he had bathed in sharp water. And now he could see.

Near the place where Hans washed the blind man's eyes, more than a hundred and fifty natives came to paddle along beside the expedition's boats. They led him to a place they called Rakertof, and there they showed him an old church of hewn stone, a large building constructed without mortar. There were two doors in the south wall, a larger door in the west. Four windows were cut through the four-foot-thick wall on the south, and a larger window was in each gable. Clustered thickly over the sturdy walls of the churchyard grew juniper and wortleberry bushes, a clump of small willow trees.

In the lush grass, reaching above the knees of the preacher, was a gravestone, a second, and a third. Upon each were engraved runic characters.

Hopeful of discovering some clue to the history of the men who had gathered in this church to worship, Hans began to dig about. He recalled the Trondenes church where he had worshiped as a youth, a church of many altars under which the Catholic priests who had first ministered there were buried. Perhaps this very church had been built at the same time, and under the place where its altar had stood, records might be stored, as had been the case in the Trondenes church.

But scarcely had he stirred the earth when excited protests broke from the Greenlanders watching him. The confidence they had shown him when they had led him to the ruins was suddenly replaced with suspicion and resentment.

The Kablunaks who lay buried here, they must not be disturbed! The preacher must not molest either the church or the graves, or surely the spirits of the Kablu-

naks would come to haunt them and seek revenge. No, the preacher must not dig, for then the Greenlanders could not dwell in the vicinity in continued peace and safety!

Hans stood up, and his mouth dropped open in amazement when he beheld one among the gathering throng whose voice was most strident and vehement. He was a head taller than his fellows, and his slanted eyes gleamed with fury. The timiak hood fallen down upon his broad shoulders revealed a head of hair not straight and black, but flaxen yellow.

As blond he was as the fairest Norwegian!

Chapter 13

OFTEN, AS HIS BOAT plowed homeward, Hans was lost in reflection and conjectures. The sight of the flaxen-haired Greenlander had shocked him into closer observation of all the natives he met as he continued his explorations in southwest Greenland. So frequently that it became almost commonplace, he saw natives in this vicinity who did not have all of the characteristic racial features of the Eskimo. There were those with slanting eyes but a fair complexion, a bronze face with blue eyes. A few had hands that were larger than the usual small ones. While he saw none so flaxen-haired as the blond giant, he found a number with hair not straight and black, but of brown and blond shades.

As he talked with them he heard words that impressed him as strikingly similar to words of the Norwegian language, alike not only in pronunciation but in meaning. And the Greenlanders told him of a Kablunak ruler who had once held dominion over the land, a man whose name, they said, was Olav.

Was it possible that instead of becoming completely exterminated by killing, the Vikings on the West Coast had amalgamated with the natives? While Hans did not

like to believe that his countrymen had sunk to the same level of barbaric living as that of the natives, still he knew that in the Arctic land, the Greenlander's nomadic hunting ways held more assurance for existence than the Northman's tilling of the soil. Furthermore, he knew that even in northern Norway, men of his own people and of his own time married the primitive Laplanders and subsequently deserted the higher plane of civilization of the Norwegians.

It could be very probable then, that in a sense, he was here in Greenland preaching to the descendants of his Viking countrymen!

Upon reaching Good Hope, Hans found that a whaling ship had arrived from Bergen. Plans were that it should remain at the colony through the winter, and that the best whaling areas should be located through the help of the natives. With this in mind, the captain had set out on an excursion northward, but soon returned, since the natives refused to give any information that would be of help.

Appeal was now made to Hans, the man the Greenlanders trusted implicitly. Hans gladly set out with a small party though it was already late September and winter might bind up the land any day. After several days' journey, they reached the vicinity reported by the natives to be good whaling grounds.[1]

The preacher arrived just in time to be treated to *matak*. Even as the white men drew near, a huge whale, towed by kayakers, was dragged upon the shore. Men, women and children rushed down from the huts, shouting happily, already smacking their lips at the contemplation of *matak*.

[1] Near present-day Holsteinborg, a favored location for whaling.

While there seemed wild chaos as the huge creature was beached, Hans could also see that even the children had their work to do. Small boys with stones kept the yapping, ravenous dogs at bay. The fathers joyfully pulled the great tail high upon the rocks until only the head lay in the water.

With razor-sharp spears, several hunters crawled upon the corrugated back of the whale and began to flense. The red blood flowed down the sides and crimsoned the water though most of the blood was carried away to feed both man and dog. Huge chunks of blubber were handed down to the waiting women; the red meat was stacked upon the rocks. Small boys stole from their chore of watching the dogs, and dodging their elders, ran greedily to the butchered whale to seize strips of the delicious *matak.*

Soon all were smeared with blood, old and young alike, and the *matak* and red meat chewed with gusto and delight. One old man lay contentedly down in the midst of the carnage, his gnarled fingers sunk into the blubber, his face against the hide upon which he gnawed.

The sailors looked at Hans in astonishment when he accepted a dripping slice of *matak* from a stalwart hunter, and ate it. Diffidently at first, they accepted the preacher's invitation to partake with him, and tasting small pieces of the *matak,* found the nutlike flavor not unpleasant.

Hours later, their stomachs distended, the Greenlander men and dogs lay down to sleep and dream—of more whale, of delicious *matak.*

Unpleasant were the days that followed. The foehn wind screamed down from the Inland Ice, hurling even gravel and small stones into the air. Like a rampant demon, it whipped the sea into pitching waves; Hans was

fearful even for the safety of the boat they had pulled ashore and weighted with rocks. Blasting with frigid cold, the winds drove all men into the shelter of the huts.

In the hut where Hans had found safety, lay a sick man. Hans had been in the hut but a short time when an old woman, amulets of bone and teeth and skin dangling from her neck and arms, entered. She bound a thong about the sick man's hands; to the other end she fastened a stick.

Then stooping over him, she began to shout questions at him. Weak from pain, he tried to answer. At regular intervals, she pulled him up to a sitting position by means of the thong. Then she let him drop back without support. Finally, she began to scream and wail like an Angakok; now two younger women brought to the sick man his finest clothing.

He must put on his burial clothes; he was to die soon. For his head fell heavily upon the floor when the sorceress dropped him!

This, Hans learned was the old "witch's" method of determining the cause of a "patient's" illness, and its seriousness. If the sick one's head fell lightly upon the floor, he would get well; if it fell heavily, the end of his life was near!

Indignantly, Hans upbraided the sorceress. Surprised at this opposition, she skulked away from him and out of the hut, muttering imprecations as she went. Now the Greenlanders turned with indignation at the preacher because he had incurred the enmity of the sorceress upon the house; she would cast an evil spell upon them, and they would die for lack of sealmeat and fish.

The witch was reputed to have a special power over the success of a hunt. Always she was brought tribute before the men of the village went out upon the sea.

Long and patiently, Hans tried to convince his hosts that God, and He alone, had power over life and death. They had heard only rumors of the preacher and what he taught; now they were eager to hear from his own lips this strange message of the gospel. The preacher's affirmation that the old sorceress could do them no harm and that she had no power over the hunt amazed them.

The weather preventing them from returning to Good Hope, Hans made use of the opportunity to preach. He found it best to live for a day in each hut; this would be the surest way of reaching all.

Entering a hut one night, he found a woman dancing and singing. There was lust in her eyes and in every contortion of her supple body. Engrossed in her lewd exhibition, those gathered about gave scant attention to the preacher.

Suddenly, the lights were extinguished. The singing and dancing continued, men and women joining with the young dancer. This, Hans realized, was the Ceremony of Putting Out the Lights, a sexual orgy in which promiscuous intercourse was practised. Loudly, Hans protested and reprimanded, but the ritual did not abate. Heartsick, he left the dwelling.

The next day was clear, permitting his party's return to the colony. Determining that with spring he would seek out these natives to preach to them, Hans set out. He had succeeded, at least, in learning the location of the best whaling.

Storms beset the party all the way home. Hans was physically exhausted when he reached the shelter of his own house and found it was crowded with extra tenants. Not only had Evi and Mala come back, but they had brought with them another family to share the food and shelter of the preacher's house.

Chapter 14

A MEMBER of his household in whom Hans found much joy and companionship was the Reverend Albert Top. Intelligent and sincere, eager to be of service, the young assistant had devoted most of his time since his arrival in Greenland to learning the native tongue. While Hans did everything in his power to help him, he realized that it was his own sons, and the native boys he had adopted that summer, who did most to teach the newcomer.

For the two missionaries, the Christmas of 1723 was all the more joyful, because by this time they had succeeded in writing a catechism in the Greenlandic language. With this aid, they were sure, the teaching of fundamental gospel truths could be more quickly and effectively carried on. With the Catechism as a textbook and guide, trained natives could be used to teach others of their people; the two Greenlander boys now under their tutelage showed a real interest and desire to be of such service.

Early in January, 1724, Hans and his assistant set out for a near-by settlement. For Albert Top it was his first venture to work among the natives. For Hans, there was

the exhilaration of knowing that henceforth he would have the consecrated help of the sincere Top.

Early one morning an urgent message came for the preacher. He must come immediately to a village where the child of an Angakok lay ill.

Desperately, the man of black magic besought Hans to heal his child. Hans recognized him as one of his worst foes, a man who had ridiculed him, who had urged the Greenlanders to turn deaf ears to the white man's preaching. Hans had seen the Angakok perform his weird ritual of "healing" beside the sick members of other families; now when his own child lay ill, his pretense was gone, swallowed up in his great concern for his son.

Would now the preacher pray to his God that the child might be restored to health?

The preacher would gladly pray. But the Angakok himself must also turn to God's Son. He must ask forgiveness for his sins; he must seek a new way of life, turn away from the deceitful pattern that heretofore had been his!

Cringing before the preacher's words, the Angakok confessed his falsehoods. Then kneeling together, the preacher taught the humbled and penitent man to pray.

The Angakok raised a faltering voice in his appeal to the Lord God; he was no longer vociferous and rasping as when he had called upon Tongarsuk.

The Lord God was the One, Hans explained, who would decide if the child should live or die. If the child was to die, the Lord wanted the little one to come to heaven. The preacher would pray that the Lord Jesus would take the little boy home, but he should first be baptized. Was the Angakok willing?

Yes, the child must be baptized! He, the Angakok,

he, too, would pray that the Lord Jesus would take the little boy home and out of his pain.

The rite of baptism had scarcely been performed when the child died. Immediately, the din of wailing resounded in the hut, and the Angakok and his wife, sobbing with grief over their loss, brought a caribou hide in which to wrap the wasted little body.

The preacher, said the Angakok, must prepare the body and carry it away for burial. It must not be touched by the Angakok and his wife or their relatives; they were unclean, they were not baptized like this little one who had now gone to live with the Lord Jesus.

So, cradling the little body in his arms, Hans walked up to the place of the mounds.

And those who followed after, followed not in devious paths, but followed directly. No need to mislead the evil spirits now. This little one was safe from demons. He had gone home to the Lord Jesus.

From this time on, the Angakok was a changed man.

But in another settlement farther away, Hans found a witch doctor who openly tried to dissuade his people from showing respect to the preacher's words. Hans ignored the railings as best he could; but when he discovered this Angakok the next day promising better luck to a man with his fish, in return for payment, Hans turned upon him and scolded him roundly.

Before a gathering crowd, Hans told the Angakok that he was a liar when he claimed that he had power over the fish of the sea. It was only God the Creator who had such power.

When the Angakok surlily ignored him and began to chant, Hans grasped a stick. Suddenly frightened, the Angakok scurried from them.

What? Was not the Angakok trustworthy? Did he

not have magic power to wield over fishing and hunting excursions?

Deep-rooted was Eskimo belief that the Angakok could bewitch, cast an evil spell upon those who did not obey his injunctions. They listened now with interest as the preacher told them that any man who made such absurd claims was a liar and most certainly not trustworthy.

With the return of the sun, Hans dared to go farther on his preaching excursions. He yearned greatly to go north to the settlement near the whaling sea. In late February, he started out alone despite the fact that treacherous weather was to be expected for several more weeks. But his concern for the spiritual welfare of these natives hung heavily upon him, and he could not wait longer.

His progress northward was slow, impeded by many storms. Always he found shelter in the earthen lodges. Wherever he went, tidings of the preacher had gone before him. No spears were ever brandished menacingly as he approached a snow-crusted dwelling. He was the maker of words—of good, kind words. He brought no evil, this white man garbed in black.

So they shared with him their squalid huts, their seal meat and walrus. And gladly, if they had it, they thrust their coveted *matak* into his hands.

One day as he struggled against a bitter wind, he came upon a skin tent pitched in a mountain valley. There in the small and overcrowded shelter lived Kiviulik, and his wife and little children. Their faces were pinched from suffering in the intense cold.

Why did they not live in a warm winter house down by the shores of the fjord?

The haunted look in Kiviulik's eyes told plainly that it was not only from cold and hunger that he suffered.

Was this preacher not the white Angakok of whom he had heard great things? Surely then, the preacher knew as the Greenlander Angakok knew, that death waited soon for Kiviulik!

No, replied the preacher, he knew no such thing.

Bewilderment came into Kiviulik's eyes. The Angakok of his own people had said that Kiviulik must die. And so he had come here with his tent even last summer so that, when he was dead, his family would be near enough to the caribou herd and would not be without food.

Yes, through the cold dark night of winter they had lived here. And life had been cruel in Kiviulik's tent. Their smallest one they had buried far up the mountain, far away so that the evil spirit that had found Kiviulik's child would not so soon find Kiviulik.

There was not room for Hans to get into the little tent, and so he stood outside with Kiviulik, seeking shelter from the piercing wind in the lee of a great boulder. There the preacher told Kiviulik that no Angakok, no man, could prophecy death, no Angakok could cast a spell upon Kiviulik and so make him an outcast from his people.

There was a God in heaven, God of love and justice. He who had created the heavens and the earth and all that was upon the earth and in the waters and in the air, the stars and the sun and the moon, He had created man in His own image. He alone had the power of life and death over men. He had a Son who had come to earth, to give Himself a ransom for the children of men—so much did the Lord God love those He had created in His own image.

Kiviulik need have no fear. About him and his life were not the chains of an evil spell. For Kiviulik a life of freedom waited. Surely the Lord God would grant him many more years of living in which to provide for his family.

Exultantly, Kiviulik called forth his wife and children, bade them prepare for a journey back to their people, back to the warmth of turf and stone. The preacher was taking them home! He would explain to the people!

And so, while the relentless wind snarled about them, Kiviulik and his family dismantled the tent. Then they followed after the white maker of words who had liberated them.

Chapter 15

AFTER FOUR WEEKS of hardship, Hans was back in the clean shelter of his own home. And as he and his family sat about the fire that first evening after his return, he told them the legend of Kekertarssuak, the "Big Island," as he had heard it several times on this last trip.

Once upon a time, it seemed, Kekertarssuak was an island off the coast of southernmost Greenland. In a near-by village lived a mighty hunter who was also a powerful Angakok. He went out every day to kill the fierce polar bear and the walrus, to slay a whale or two, but always he had to walk around the Big Island. And he was annoyed.

So he decided he would just pull Kekertarssuak out of the way.

Having mighty magic powers, he took a single hair from his head, tied one end of it about Kekertarssuak and the other end to his great kayak. And away he paddled toward the north, the island following right behind him. He would just pull that annoying island up to the very north of the land and he would never be troubled with it again.

All went well until he was almost halfway up the

west coast of Greenland. He was just passing Nugsuak peninsula when an old woman, a rival magician, spotted him. It amused her greatly to see how the Angakok puffed and struggled with what ought to be an easy tow. Surely any one with *real* magical powers would make easy work of towing an island the size of Kekertarssuak.[1]

The old sorceress laughed outright and ridiculed the mighty hunter until the charm broke. The hair tied to the island split. Kekertarssuak settled down in the sea in its present location.

Did not the preacher believe this? Then he ought to go to Kekertarssuak and see for himself if the island was not as warm and as filled with flowers and trees as the southernmost spot in Greenland! Indeed, since the preacher had come from a land that was not as cold as this, he might find it wise to move permanently to Kekertarssuak.

At Good Hope, the twenty-one men of the whaling expedition, restive under the yoke of winter and the monotonous existence at the colony, were eager to leave. Hans gave the captain explicit directions for finding the proposed location of the new trading and whaling post, and preparations were made for departure as soon as the season permitted.

Albert Top went with the whaling crew to serve as pastor at the station and also to minister to the natives in the vicinity of the new "Nepisene." To act as his interpreter and to continue his instruction in the native tongue, one of the orphan boys was sent along with Top.

Again the land was clothed in green. Kristine and Solveig made daily jaunts to near-by meadows and coves to gather flowers for the Egede table. Hans preached

[1] Present-day Disko Island.

to a congregation that came and went almost daily in umiaks and kayaks pointed north. One beautiful day in May when a flotilla of skin boats beached below the colony, the preacher went out to welcome them and beheld again the Greenlander with the flaxen hair.

For Hans this sight stirred deep emotions. While he preached fervently to the slant-eyed company, his concern for the spiritual welfare of the Vikings of the Eastern Settlement was aroused anew. Somehow, he could not bring himself to believe that the Vikings had disappeared from the land or that their only descendants were of mixed blood. Somewhere on the east coast, he was sure there were those who still spoke the Norwegian language, who still cherished the traditions and cultures of their forefathers, but who were in need of the gospel.

When the provision ships arrived from Bergen, Hans again wrote to his friends, to the Mission College, and to the King, of the results of his exploration in the south, and of his conviction that the Vikings had been too well established in the land to vanish completely.

The ships had brought the news that the Bergen merchants were quitting the Greenland trade for it had not proved profitable. The king, however, would continue to support the mission through taxes. This was, in a sense, welcome tidings for Hans; he was thereby relieved of responsibilities he had held in connection with the trade.

When the ships made ready to return, a young Greenlander youth by the name of Poek prepared to embark. He wanted to go to the strange land about which he had heard so much from Paul and Nils. He wanted to learn, too, how the sailors could live while they had neither houses nor land.

But when the time came for Poek to leave, his courage

forsook him. Only after Hans had succeeded in coaxing another youth to accompany Poek, did the first Greenlander delegation to Denmark, board ship. They would return, Hans was confident, better able to explain to their people the white man's civilization, than the white men themselves could explain.

One pleasant day in August when the natives were gone for many miles around, Hans decided that he and his family should have a little vacation "in the country." Gertrude, bound these years to the duties of a large household, was happy to leave the house in charge of her sons.

In holiday spirit, Gertrude and Hans and the two girls rowed up the fjord. They would camp in some delightful spot, roast fish over open fires—there would be blueberries and service berries to gather—and take time just to sit in the sunshine. Hans would cut some of the lush grass. They would dry it, pile it high in the boat, ride home on the soft and fragrant hay they would store in the new barn built for their most recent acquisition, milk cows.

Carefree were the days as Hans frolicked with Kristine and Solveig. For the present he dropped from his shoulders the problems that beset him at the colony, and he felt again something like the boy he had been on the little island of Sand in Nordland.

How different the childhood of his children here! For Kristine and Solveig, there were no little girls of their race and culture as companions. Truly, they knew more about the games of little Greenland children than they knew of the games little Norwegian girls would play.

This summer, two women had come to Good Hope on the Bergen ship. Maret was the wife of the trader's

assistant; her sister Inga was unmarried. How starved Gertrude had been to chat with other women!

Maret and Inga brought with them little china dolls for the missionary's daughters, and Kristine and Solveig were overjoyed. The dolls were a glimpse back to a land and a people they were forgetting. Here in Greenland they lacked the advantages that had been almost commonplace to Gertrude when she was a girl in Bergen. The only music they knew was the song of the birds, the none-too-melodic hymn singing when the colonists gathered for devotions and Sunday services. They remembered only dimly the deep-throated tones of the great cathedral organ in Bergen.

While Gertrude taught them to knit with yarn, how to embroider and to sew, they seemed to possess a more natural understanding of the skin clothes their little Eskimo friends wore, and which their brothers gladly adopted.

Early, the boys were attracted to the Greenland way of life. For them the nomadic, hunting life spelled the adventure and excitement they craved. It had not taken Nils and Paul long to learn the skills demonstrated by Olabi and Eskias and Tukajak. It was even true that they did not gain a full measure of Greenlander respect until they outdid their brown-skinned playmates in their own games and accomplishments. For a time, it seemed to Hans that his sons were so interested in everything that the natives did that they almost wished they were Eskimos themselves.

But the weeks of living with Olabi and Eskias and Tukajak had given the boys a more realistic understanding of Eskimo life. They returned to their father's house and the white man's way of life with new appreciation. Their talk of becoming great hunters ceased. Respect for their

own father and his calling grew. While Nils and Paul wore the fur clothes of the Greenlander when extreme weather prevailed, and while their understanding of the Greenlanders grew with their years, they tended also, year by year, to think of their own homeland and to consider the opportunities it offered. Already, Paul wanted to become a naval officer, to wear a handsome uniform of cloth and not the clumsy outfit of the Eskimo.

Hans thought of how Gertrude's relatives had upbraided him for taking his children to a land where they could never be expected to grow up as respectable, civilized Norwegians, if they did not die from hardship and hunger before reaching maturity.

Well, it had been as Gertrude stoutly maintained: since the Lord wanted them in Greenland, He would look after the welfare of their children. Now, as Hans looked thoughtfully over the horizon where the great icecap glistened like an encrusted jewel, he found no regrets for his mad venture into Greenland for the sake of the gospel. He leaned upon his scythe and listened to the echo of the little girls laughing with their mother.

His Kristine and Solveig, they would be all right. They would grow up to be as civilized as the girls in the city of Bergen. Some day they would return to the homeland, marry, and establish households of their own. There would be no mark of Greenland barbarism upon their lives, only a greater appreciation of the Christian way of life.

Not far from where they camped, Hans discovered a small group of native tents, and went to them to preach. When a few men from Good Hope arrived, they and Hans joined these natives on a caribou hunt far up into the mountains.

They reached the border of the Inland Ice. On the

other side of this vast expanse of ice lay the Eastern Settlement of his own countrymen! Could men cross the Inland Ice to the other side of the land?

No, replied the natives, not even a Greenlander had been able to do that! They never went far out upon the ice except to capture the caribou they drove out upon the glacial stretches.

Only the *Quivituts* entered the evil dome of ice.

The Quivituts? They were the men who went into the *nunataks,* the ice mountains, driven there because of some overpowering disappointment; more often they were bewitched by the evil spirits of the dead who themselves were *Quivituts.* Sometimes a man lured into the mountains came back shortly, cured of his melancholia, but more often they did not return.

Yes, it was the Greenlander dead who became *Quivituts* and roamed the desolate wastes of ice. Lonely, they endeavored to spirit away their friends and relatives to join them in their dreary realm of everlasting ice and wind and snow.

Therefore the living must walk in devious ways when they carried the dead to burial, they must mislead the yearning *Quivitut* spirits. And always there was the dread among the living that some lonely *Quivitut* would single out some living person, and call him with a call that could not be resisted into the horrors of ice and wind and bitter cold.

Back at the camp, Hans and his family found no further enjoyment in outdoor living when clouds of mosquitoes attacked them. With their boat loaded with the sweet-smelling meadow hay, they returned to Good Hope.

Hans now preached almost daily to the natives returning from the North. Sometimes he would row out to

the bands of those he could see were going by without stopping. While his impromptu congregation rested their paddles, he stood up in his boat and taught them.

With the first snowfall, the Greenlanders settled for the winter and Hans began a regular schedule of visitation among them. While most of the people heard him gladly, he found indifference and opposition to his preaching in the seven earth and stone lodges on Koek Island. Here were nearly forty families living, and the preacher was eager to have the Word of God sown in their hearts. He had visited them the previous winter; they had been agreeable and hospitable.

Early in November, accompanied by Paul and two colonists, Hans went to Koek Island to stay for several days. The first night there, the roof of his hut fell in. No one was injured, though there was much suffering since a terrible storm raged. But the physical suffering he endured that night was as nothing compared with that which he experienced in his heart as the Greenlanders reviled him, showed him little personal respect. What had happened?

Disorder prevailed when he stood up to preach. Even when he stationed the two colonists, one at either end of the hut to maintain quiet, there was still much lack of attention. During the sermon, they were restless. One after another, they stood up to object to the length of his discourse. Had he not talked long enough? Well then, how much longer was he going to preach? Would he show them on his arm how much of the sermon remained?

The whole arm, of course, represented the entire sermon. If Hans felt that he was in the middle of his sermon, he measured up to his elbow. Somewhat mollified, the listeners now put one hand at the elbow and

gradually moved the hand down. The rate at which these measuring hands moved downward varied, of course, with the eagerness of the hearer to have the sermon concluded. If the native's hand reached the end of his arm, and the preacher went right on, there was much disgust as the listener started to measure anew. There were those, also, who exclaimed at such times with much feeling, *"Ama!"* (Still more!)

It was the young Paul, however, who endured the most violent persecution during the services. He had an excellent singing voice and went with his father to lead the singing of hymns. In most of the settlements, the people enjoyed singing and were quick to learn the tunes, if not the words. But in the Koek Island settlement, Paul's efforts to instruct in hymnody were not appreciated.

If he sang more than three or four stanzas, or attempted a second hymn in succession, he was quite sure to have a wet mitten slapped into his open mouth.

When the Angakok who lived at Koek Island attended the preaching, there was always an uproar. He called the preacher a liar, and ridiculed the Christian doctrines of creation, of heaven and hell. If the preacher was a follower of One mightier than Tongarsuk, then why could he not heal the sick like Jesus?

When a second Angakok arrived at Koek and joined the other in ridiculing the preacher, Hans realized that the Angakoks disliked him because they realized that they lost their influence over those who even superficially accepted the Christian teachings.

As he continued to visit Koek Island, he observed that the might of the Angakoks was beginning to show itself more and more ominous. Like the preacher, the Angakoks went from settlement to settlement. Even as good

tidings about the preacher had been spread from clan to clan, so now Hans knew that enmity against him was being fomented in several settlements by the Angakoks.

There would come a time when the preacher would be challenged to prove even his right to live and preach in a land that had always been the dominion of the Angakoks. There was no doubt in Hans Egede's mind that the crafty witch doctors had looked upon the ruins of the old Kablunak civilization, and were determined that just so the houses of these new Kablunaks should be laid waste. All that was necessary was the united assault of a mob from the multitudes of Greenlanders.

Chapter 16

NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1725, was a day of great festivity at Good Hope for Inga and Hjalmar were married. Betrothed since October, the young couple had yearned for the privacy of a home of their own; fortunately, Hjalmar Karlsen, second assistant to the trader, had happened upon the well-preserved walls of an old Viking house, hidden in a sheltered cove right on the Island of Good Hope.

In this land where there were few trees, and those never of timber size, there was little wood for the building of a house. But from the trader's store, Hjalmar obtained one large beam to cross from gable to gable of the hewn-stone house; across this he laid saplings and the bark of birch trees, and upon the bark, slabs of grassy sod. With supple willow twigs and sealskin thongs, Hjalmar and Inga contrived chairs and even a table for their home.

The hardy young couple gloried in this adventure of establishing their home where, centuries before, the hearthfire of their countrymen had burned.

The day after the wedding, Hans found another orphan boy to adopt. His house was not so crowded

now that Evi and Mala and their friends had established a winter house of their own in a settlement not far from Good Hope.

Since the little boy was lonesome for playmates, Hans felt fortunate when he discovered another small orphan of the same age. This one he brought to his house also. But the following day, the foster father of the first, having changed his mind, insisted on having the boy returned to him. The second boy, Uminguak, felt a strong liking for the preacher and had no desire to return to his own people. And the sweet-tasting pastries baked by his new white mother, the clothes with buttons, these the little Uminguak found delightful.

In January, Hans made a trip some distance to the south and was encouraged to find a growing feeling of kindliness toward him there. After his grievous experiences on Koek Island, this was doubly gratifying. The natives told the preacher that now they prayed to the Lord God when they went out to hunt, and the hunting was always successful.

One day, feeling quite ill, Hans decided to send Paul out in his place. Now nearly seventeen years of age, the boy had matured spiritually. While he clung to the youthful dream of becoming a naval officer, he was also drawn by a growing conviction that the ministry was his place, that he should help his father in bringing the gospel to the Greenlanders.

Paul returned from his trip, modestly reporting that the natives had given attention when he talked to them. When Hans next visited the same settlement, he found the natives enthusiastic about the preacher's son. With unabashed frankness, they explained that this son of his could speak so that they could readily understand; *he* did

not garble and chew up the words the way the preacher did!

Hans rejoiced at this news. Paul seemed, indeed, to have a "Greenlander's tongue." More than this, he possessed an understanding of his brown friends such as the elder Egede could never hope to attain; reared among them in his formative years, he had absorbed their ways.

From this time on, Hans sent Paul out regularly to teach. Through this help, he was able to reach almost twice as many natives with the message of the Word.

Despite the treachery of the season, Hans set out for Nepisene, the new whaling post established far to the north. He wanted to find for himself how the whaling crew there fared. More particularly, he was interested in Albert Top's progress with the evangelization of the natives in that vicinity.

Hans reached Nepisene without special difficulty. Here greeted him, not only the colonists and his fellow missionary, but the first real convert to Christianity in Greenland! The orphan boy, Top had brought with him, had experienced the regenerating love of Christ, and had been baptised.

Of Paul's age, the boy now bore the Christian name of Fredrik Christian. Already, the boy had begun studies to prepare himself for bringing the gospel to his own people. Unlike Rusak and Navia, Fredrik had always taken much interest in learning to read and write.

Here was to be the first native catechist for which Hans had prayed so long! Fredrik was intelligent, of scholarly inclinations, sensitive in spirit. He and Paul had been close friends ever since the Greenlander boy had come to live in the Egede home two years earlier. Now

as Hans visited with him, he was hungry to hear all the news of his foster home and especially of Paul.

When he heard that his friend now went out to teach the Greenlanders, Fredrik said with fervent emotion, "I want to be like Paul. I want to teach my people. I want them to know, even as I know, what it is like never to be haunted by fear of evil spirits. I want them to know my Saviour!"

The long way back to Good Hope did not seem so long to Hans now. A native had given his heart to Jesus Christ! One convert, after nearly four years of hardship and peril, yet the winning of Fredrik Christian to a saving knowledge of Christ was sufficient reward.

What was it that the Bible said about the bounty of a spiritual heart—like a winepress, pressed down and filled to overflowing? So now his own heart!

Yes, there was the cruelty of Arctic winters, and the prison-like existence that had almost driven some of the colonists mad, that made men harsh of tongue and short of temper. Each long winter night, all were shackled like prisoners to their post; their only communication with loved ones in the homeland, the annual arrival of the provision ships from Bergen. News of the illness of some member of their family might be brought, and a year must drag by before they could know whether death or health had come to that loved one.

But always there was the faithful Gertrude, waiting at home, praying for his safety, listening hourly for the sound of his returning step. Gertrude would sing to her children, tell them quaint stories from Norwegian folk-lore, while little Solveig would ask over and over again if Papa would not be home soon. And though she prayed often, committing the welfare of her husband to the Lord, yet would her heart quake with the thought that the

loved footstep might perhaps never again resound upon the threshold.

How often when he had gone, expecting to be away for but a day, had the foehn winds descended and enforced a stay of several days, even of weeks. And although he might be safe in a native hut, Gertrude could not know but that her husband lay buried under an avalanche of snow, or overcome by cold and wind, lay prostrate, perhaps dead—a prey for the jackals and ravenous wolves.

Summer and winter, Hans had journeyed between the Sundays to preach to those who would hear him. Sometimes he plied the waters of the fjords, the streams of the mainland, or the open sea in the trader's boat. Usually he went alone, or with only a native companion.

There were times when he could find no shelter before night fell, and weariness of the flesh overcame him. And because there was no other way, he pulled his boat upon the land, tipped it over himself and slept. There were times even, when his boat had been stolen from him by a sudden foehn wind and wrecked against some rock-bound shore. Yet no matter what might happen to his vessel, Hans always escaped injury.

Often his feet had become numb from cold as he sat in the small sail boat, and he would dangle his bare feet into the cold sea water to restore feeling. Often after spending the night in a native lodge, he came from it with his clothes so dirty and vermin-ridden that when he reached his boat, he changed completely, no matter how forbidding the weather. There were countless times when he returned home that the black gown he always wore was so frozen that it stood erect by itself.

Once when Paul was with him, they found an empty winter house and lay down to sleep there in the darkness.

In the morning they awoke to find that their beds had been the frozen bodies of men who had once inhabited the hut.

But always Hans went on—wading waist deep in snow through mountain valleys, grasping at the face of steep cliffs, crawling along the edges of precipices, sliding down mountain escarpments—sometimes not knowing where his sore feet led him, knowing only the assurance that the Lord was beside him, that if death should suddenly claim him, his Saviour would stand with arms outstretched on the Other Side.

Yes, it was worth it, worth all these gruelling hardships, to win this one Greenlander youth to his loving Christ!

Chapter 17

PERSONAL JEALOUSY, grudges against one another, arguments—the Greenlanders had a most unique way of settling such differences, Hans discovered. While vengeance sometimes resolved itself in murder, the most common means of decision was the "taunting ditty." The man who could sing the most scalding song of accusation and name-calling, he was the victor!

The green respite of summer months having passed once more, the native women were busy repairing the winter huts while their husbands gathered to witness a duel of song between two men who sought to win the same young girl. Hans came and joined them. To translate the stream of torrid words that poured from the mouths of these swains would be a severe test of his command of their language!

No gleaming lance, no chivalrous knights' sword, no sharp rapier, no pistol in this duel—but a drum, to accompany the knifing of a man's honor with words.

Avitarluk had challenged; Tautook had responded. And now, as a jury, their companions were gathered about them to make judgment and declare the conqueror.

Avitarluk, the challenger, had right to the first taunt;

and, beating upon the taut skin of his drum, he began his song:

Behold the skulking pretender to manhood, sniveling wearer of ordinary sealskin, who would dare to believe that Nazooka would have him for mate. Where was his caribou timiak, with ears waggling, such as Avitarluk wore? Poor fare would the wife of Tautook have from him, he who had not even killed a walrus. Nazooka deserved a husband who would bring walrus tusks home, beautiful white walrus tusks. Tautook could bring her only the bristles of a seal!

This sally brought loud approbation from the audience. Now it was Tautook's turn. He seized his drum; his fingers danced angrily upon it as he replied:

Behold the bold chatterer pouring brave words into the air like a whale spouting harmless water to frighten away his enemies. True it was that Tautook had never harpooned a walrus, but had the braggart Avitarluk killed the great white bear? No, indeed, *he* had not the courage even to trail a white bear cub. Puny skinner of walrus blubber, boastful holder of a walrus tusk! He had no great white bearskin for Nazooka to sit upon while she chewed kamik skins.

Applause showed at this point that Tautook had overcome Avitarluk. Now could Avitarluk split sharper, biting words with the axe of his tongue?

After further rounds, Avitarluk's vilest belittling was judged inferior to the stout defense Tautook sung for himself, and so Tautook was declared the vanquisher. Thereupon, a new challenger arose from the assembly and a second joust of wits and invective followed.

Finally, Tautook was again proclaimed unvanquished and he stalked proudly off to court the plump Nazooka.

Now stood up the proud Poek, he who basked in a

glory no other Greenlander might claim. For had he not been to the land of the Kablunaks, and seen many and wondrous sights? He had even stood before the great king of the white people! He must tell again of the people who existed though they had no walrus, no whale, no seal, no great white bear.

And so Poek told again of the land where houses stood one upon another, and still did not cave in. Of houses where the air was like summer, even in winter, and was not filled with the smoke of seal oil, and the sweat of men's bodies. Of huge buildings where the Kablunaks met to sing and to speak about the great God, houses so large that many Greenlander tents could be set inside.

Animals like caribou without horns there were, drawing sleds behind them like dogs in wintertime. And in the warm months these strange caribou without horns pulled sleds that did not glide, but moved upon whirling drums. The land there stretched out level as the ice on the mountain lakes in Greenland; and there grazed other animals that were like caribou, but from which the Kablunaks drew food in white streams, animals like those the preacher now had.

Most marvelous of all the sights, though, was the great house of the king of the Kablunaks. Like a great iceberg it was in size, and full of many, many rooms, each one larger than an entire winter hut in Greenland. Soft under the feet were the great skins of Kablunak cloth and as bright with color as the embroidered kamiks of Greenlander women. On the walls of the rooms hung pictures, such as the preacher's son drew, only these were much larger and far more beautiful than those of Pieua. Most surprising of them all were the pictures that shone like ice and gave back the image of Poek.

And over all this greatest of houses, and over all the

great land, ruled the king of the Kablunaks. No man was so powerful as he!

Was this king, then, as great as God, Poek's friends asked the preacher.

The king, replied Hans, was a man such as all other men, even though other men were obedient to him. He was the ruler and he worked for the welfare of his people. When there were evildoers, the king punished them.

Well, if the king was so great in power and honor, did he then fear the Lord God?

Yes, the king feared and honored God, just as did his own subjects. The king himself was a subject of the Lord God.

Was the king, then, more important than the preachers?

Yes, the king was more important than the preachers, but when any preacher spoke the Word of God to him, the king listened with respect, and followed God's will in his own life.

If the king punished evildoers, would he not protect the Greenlanders from the Kablunaks, who sometimes came ashore and stole from them, even some of their brave hunters?

Hans had heard of incidents in which sailors from foreign ships had impressed both men and women. He replied that the land of the Greenlanders was under the protection of this great king; that the monarch would do all in his power to keep the Greenlanders safe on their own shores. Indeed, the king loved the Greenlanders, he had sent the preacher to their land to tell them about Jesus. The king gave from his own store of supplies, so that the preacher could establish the mission in Greenland. The king would be happy if the Greenlanders learned to love him.

Such a great king the Greenlanders surely respected. But they were a poor people. How could they show him that they honored him? They had but blubber and hides to offer, but these they would gladly share with him.

The colony at Nepisene was discontinued shortly after the provision ship arrived from Norway, and Hans had cause for both regret and rejoicing.

He was sorry that the Greenland trade had not proved lucrative to the Bergen company, and it was discouraging to have the mission outpost at Nepisene withdrawn. Yet he knew that, zealous and energetic as was Albert Top, and devoted as was the help of the proselyte, Fredrik Christian, a good groundwork for the spread of the gospel had been laid in that area.

Yet, he was glad to have the two men home again. Their companionship was something he prized. Constantly, he was amazed at the native boy's comprehension of Christian doctrines and at his intellectual attainments. Fredrik Christian could read fluently in the Norwegian language, could sing hymns in Norwegian and helped translate them into the vernacular.

The power of the gospel had penetrated his pagan heart, and the course of his life was altered. He who, without the gospel, would have become a primitive hunter, was now a man as civilized as any European. He had moral character that made Hans doubly ashamed of some of the colonists and sailors with whom the boy must associate daily.

Late that same fall, one of the orphan boys in the Egede household died. While Hans was saddened at this loss, he was thankful that the youth had learned to know Christ.

Hans was also heartened when Poek returned to the

colony. Immediately after his return from Denmark, he had married in the customary Greenland manner, then spent the summer in hunting and fishing, and orating to his fellow men concerning his travels abroad.

Now he brought his wife with him, requesting that the preacher instruct them both in Christianity. The way of life that the preacher and his wife led, that was the way of life which Poek desired for himself and his wife.

Having the help of Albert Top and Fredrik Christian, Hans began to translate portions of the New Testament, particularly the texts to be used on Sundays.

Shortly after the New Year, 1726, the preacher and his three colleagues—Top, Fredrik Christian, and Paul—began their routine of visitations throughout the surrounding territory.

While there were always strange faces to be seen in the villages, the majority of the natives were familiar. Many of them had spent successive winters in the same huts, and had, each season, been taught by the preacher. The fruits of this teaching now began to appear; not a few of the Greenlanders evidenced a growing comprehension of fundamental Christian doctrines. And they were able to help in the instruction of the new members of their group who had never heard of God.

To offset this, was growing evidence of the suspicion and enmity fomented by the Angakoks. From one loyal native, Hans learned of a horrifying plot:

The preacher and his people would be easily exterminated; for they were daily in the habit of being widely separated from one another. He and his helpers were usually off speaking their false words in the homes of the Greenlanders. The trader was off to barter, and the other colonists were away hunting and fishing, so there would be left at the colony only the preacher's wife and

the other women and young girls. That was the time to strike. Spears, blessed by the magic of the Angakoks, would not miss their marks. And then the Greenlanders could divide the goods of the Kablunaks amongst themselves!

Instigator of the plot was the Angakok who had caused so much trouble at Koek Island the previous winter.

Hans knew there was substance to the evil tale. He had read it in the faces and in the mocking actions of a growing number of Greenlanders.

Action must be taken quickly.

Hans Egede was not the missionary only; he was the official head of the colony as well. He was the representative of the king in a land claimed by the United Kingdoms of Denmark and Norway. He was officially responsible for the safety and welfare of the colony.

He promptly called a meeting of the people of Good Hope to determine what strategy seemed advisable. A few quick-tempered men proposed bloody vengeance on any natives that proved themselves subversive.

"No," countered Hans, "those who kill by the sword will perish by the sword. We cannot teach the Greenlanders brotherly love by killing them. I would rather die myself than to shoot one of them. Even if combat proved necessary, we must remember that they are armed only with spears while we have guns.

"There is only one of them that needs disciplining. That one is the Angakok. He has used base cunning to further his wicked ways and has extorted not only amulets but hides and furs and food from his fellow men in exchange for his rituals of black magic. He is but a bluffer, he will quickly turn tail!

"We will fetch him here, imprison him until he is will-

ing to mend his ways. If he is unwilling to reform, we can send him to Denmark to let the king deal with him as with other malefactors."

In the largest boat, filled with men, Hans set out for the Angakok's settlement. When they arrived at the island, the Greenlanders, with characteristic curiosity, streamed from the five earth huts to view this deputation of white men. Trailing at their rear was the Angakok.

With calm words of greeting to the throng, Hans strode at the head of his men, pushing his way through the crowd. The Greenlanders sensed that this time the preacher had not come to make words and to bear the persecution of their mockery, and many of them slunk back.

Now Hans faced the glowering Angakok. Spitting cat-like at the preacher, the Angakok started to run. Hans seized him by the arm.

He expected a violent struggle. But the Angakok screamed like a frightened little boy. He seemed terrified by the very nearness of the preacher. When two of the colonists stepped on either side and took an arm, he cowered between them.

Suddenly realizing that such cowardly actions would ruin his hold on the people, the Angakok shrieked orders for an attack upon the white men.

Fierce resentment broiled in the dark eyes of his followers. Next, terror flamed as the Angakok cried out that he would bewitch them all, unless they obeyed his commands.

But the sight of the Kablunak guns stayed assault.

"Hush," the preacher ordered the Angakok, and he quieted like an obedient child. Then in a tone that could be heard by all, Hans said, "You foolish one! We know that you have been stirring up your people against the

Kablunaks. You have planned to kill us and divide our goods amongst yourselves.

"*You* are the evil one, Angakok! This is *your* plan, and the plan of the other Angakoks. You are afraid of the preacher and his words because the preacher teaches your people that Angakoks are liars and that the Angakoks do not have the magical powers they claim to possess. So you want to kill the preacher and his people.

"It is not your people who want to do this. For they do not kill without just cause. They are a peaceable people. This the preacher has learned from many visits with them. It is only when evil Angakoks like you stir them up that they have wicked thoughts of murder.

"Now we shall take you with us to the house of the Kablunaks and keep you there. You will have time to realize that it is not wise to plot against the preacher and his people."

With the Angakok's hands now bound behind his back, he was taken to the boat. Behind him, fear and amazement filled his followers.

At the colony, Hans had the Angakok's feet chained and his arms freed. He was not to be tormented or persecuted in any manner.

So loathsome was his appearance, so filthy his person, that none of the colonists cared even to observe him. Hans and Gertrude brought him food, made him as comfortable as possible, then left him to his own thoughts.

The next day several of his followers appeared meekly at the colony. They did not enquire after the Angakok, but Hans knew they were curious as to his fate, that they might think the Angakok had been killed by the Kablunaks.

He, therefore, took them directly to the Angakok. He left them to visit him privately, knowing that none of

them would be able to loose him from the chain. But he had not gone beyond hearing distance, when one of the callers sneered: "Where now, Angakok, is your magic power?"

Chapter 18

THE ANGAKOK'S LACK of any real magic power exposed before his people, he became less surly, and after a few days, retired into grim silence. Like a whipped dog, he cowered against the wall of his room whenever his fellows came to stare curiously at him, sometimes to taunt him. Only his wife and children lamented his imprisonment, and begged the preacher to release him.

After a stern warning to the Angakok that he desist from any further plotting against human life, Hans unchained him. While Hans realized that he had not gained the chastised man's friendship, it was, however, also evident that this particular witch doctor would give no further trouble.

Winter passed and the time came when the provision ship from Bergen was expected daily. But the month of May slipped by. Then on the second day in June, one of the colonists found the painted beam of a ship washed up on the rocky shore.

The next day a broken spar came to view. Natives in the vicinity reported other pieces of timber washed upon the land, to tell almost as plainly as words that the tragedy

of shipwreck had occurred somewhere off the west coast of Greenland.

Despair clutched the hearts of the people at Good Hope. Already, the provisions were running short. Ammunition for their guns was gone, so they could not hunt. They must depend upon the good will of their neighbors for caribou and seal meat.

The only possible source of food rations was the Dutch whaling ships which at this time of the year would be in the Nepisene area and farther north. With two of the colony's largest boats heavily-manned, Hans left Good Hope in an effort to reach the Dutch traders.

For five days and nights, they labored with oars and sails, and at last were rewarded with the sight of twelve Dutch vessels. But Hans knew that there was not the most kindred feeling existing between the Dutch traders and the Scandinavian people. Shortly after the Norwegians had deserted Nepisene, Dutch sailors landed and set fire to the buildings, burning them to the ground, patently from commercial hostility. The Dutch regularly traded in Greenland waters that were claimed by the Norwegian-Danish kingdom. Hans was, therefore, dubious of the welcome he and his men would get.

It was his hope that the Dutch would consent to taking ten of his men back to Europe, thus making at least ten mouths less to feed at Good Hope. Further, he would appeal for provisions to keep the twenty-one remaining colonists from suffering possible starvation.

Two of the twelve captains willingly granted portions of their supplies to the Norwegians. The other ten gave such miserly shares that Hans knew at once that his people would never be able to live through the winter without rations from some additional source. His offer of payment for provisions was spurned. He was much

relieved, however, when the ten men were taken on board.

Reluctantly, he set sail for the colony at Good Hope. The inadequate amount of provisions he brought with him would give no encouragement to men who already hungered.

Of bread, eight men must be satisfied with one man's ration. Desperately, Hans and his men began to preserve salmon for winter use. While gnawing stomachs made the colonists irritable, a few natives arrived to tell a story that crushed the last hope that a provision ship might still come.

Far to the south, the natives had seen a European ship surrounded by pack ice. Only the masts of the ship were above the water. Upon the deck, waist deep in the icy water, men cried out for help and the preacher!

But had they not tried to rescue the Kablunaks?

No. They had not dared go out into the churning sea, amongst the icebergs and growlers. And the sinking ship had drifted far out into the sea until they could no longer hear the shrieking men.

With a sickening realization, Hans knew of the native dread of touching men who were dying or soon to die. He had seen them stand indifferently on the shore while one of their own hunters, his kayak tipped over, floundered to his death in the water. No attempt was made to retrieve the body. To do so, their Angakoks warned them, was but to invite the evil spirits of the Quivituts to pursue and find them.

But on the fifteenth day of July, the colonists beheld with eyes that scarcely dared believe what they saw, a ship from Bergen! With saddened hearts, they soon learned, that this was the second ship sent to them from Norway that year.

On board the ship were the ten men Hans had left

with the Dutch. The two ships had met at sea, and the ten had been glad to board the Norwegian ship, bringing provisions to Good Hope.

One day, not long after the ship's return to Norway, the moon rode between the sun and the earth, and darkness began to cover the land at midday. For Hans and his colonists, the eclipse of the sun was an interesting phenomenon to observe, and they stopped their work to watch the spectacle, certainly not expecting to witness the demonstration that was shortly to follow.

Several Greenlander families had already arrived for the winter on the Island of Hope, and were living in their tents while the women repaired the huts. Now as the sun began to darken, these people came running, screaming with terror, to the house of the preacher.

Scarcely had they arrived and Hans commenced to placate them, when the sound of wailing and screaming echoed from across the fjord; there a small band of kayaks and umiaks paddled toward Good Hope. From farther away came the distant shrieking of another company, hurrying toward the preacher.

Darker grew the land as the moon hid more and more of the sun from view. Before the sun was half-covered, the waters of Hope Sea teemed with skin boats filled with frantic natives.

So great now became the din and clamor that Hans could not make himself heard. Those he calmed were aroused to new fear at the sight of others in the grip of terror. Frightened little children clung to mothers who were even more alarmed. One hunter wildly brandished a spear at the disappearing sun.

Grimy hands of children, the plump ones of those in the prime of life, the wizened claws of old men and

women, all reached in supplication toward the preacher. Some tugged at his sleeve. Hoarsely, voices implored him to protect them from the evil spirits that would soon close in upon them.

All the Angakoks' crying, all their screaming and magic had not availed to frighten away this darkness full of demons, ready to descend and torture them.

Now only a small slice of the sun showed. What would this wild mob do when the sun was completely lost from sight? Some were nearly insane from fear. It was probable that they might crowd so close upon him that not only Hans, but others, would be trampled to death.

But there was always the Lord, always His protecting wings.

Hans thrust his way through the entangling arms and found Paul, Reverend Top and Fredrik Christian. He shouted to them to assure as many individuals as possible that the Lord God was up there, and He would not allow harm to come to any of them, that the sun would appear again soon, that they had no need to be afraid.

And so, quickly yelling into the ears of one after another of the elders, Hans and his colleagues sowed this leaven of assurance amongst the panicky throng.

But suddenly, the clamor crescendoed into a roar. Strident shrieks tattered the air. Frenzied fists grasped stones ready to hurl against the demons, as the final curved sliver of light was shuttered by the moon.

Fear blanched the hearts of those whose eyes peered into the darkness for the vulture spirits. Then silence blanketed the host.

Into the darkness and the silence, came the calm voice of the preacher.

"Fear not, for the Lord God is with us always. The Lord God rules over the sun and the moon and the stars

and the earth. The Lord God will make His sun to shine again. Have no fear, dear friends, you will see the sun in a short time."

Frightened, like little children, Hans beheld them. Stripped of their bravado in the face of a calamity that overwhelmed their understanding, they had come to him, pleading protection, for mercy against the evils of a darkness they could not comprehend. Earnestly, Hans prayed that this experience would bring them closer to God.

Chapter 19

WHEN THE SUN illumined the land once more, their fear lifted from the Greenlanders. Shouting with relief, they hastened to their boats to take up again the unhurried routine of their living.

What was past was past; only the present mattered. The Greenlander was never guilty of borrowing trouble from the future. Hans reflected that he would never have need to preach on the text: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." For centuries, the Greenlander had made his own application of this idea to his mode of living. Indeed, sufficient unto each day was the evil thereof.

So long as there was enough food for the day, why think of the times when there was not food, why consider that such circumstances might return? While seal meat dangled from the ceiling, while streams held codfish and salmon, while the seals sunned themselves upon the nearby glacier, what else was there to do but eat and drink and be merry?

Though they hunted through the languid days of summer, it was not to store up provisions for winter, but to

supply the present need. Skins for winter clothes perhaps; but the compelling motive was the manly glory of harpooning a walrus or tracking down a bear. No matter how many times they might hunger in winter, no matter how many times they sustained mere existence by chewing the skin and leather of the very clothes they wore, the memory of such an experience was soon cast aside when once again their bellies were full.

Thus, too, it was with death. There was always a dimly haunting fear of the Quivitut spirit reaching them. Occasionally, this fear grappled one of their clan and drove him into distraction or into the mountains; but the fear was never so extreme or so widespread as when death actually took from them one of their clan. Panic then smote them, and they hurriedly bore the body away, touching it as little as possible.

Although the Greenlander spent much of his time upon the water in his kayak, he did not know how to swim. Tied into his frail little craft so that no water could enter it, he might be charged by a wounded walrus and his boat ripped open or overturned. Many a brave hunter was drowned after failing to right himself and his boat; other hunters might be near in their own kayaks—they might help, they might not. It was not wise to touch a dying man! If the unfortunate man and his kayak were washed out to sea, that was *iarpok.*

Bad—too bad!

But for those still living, life would go on.

While fear had engulfed them during the eclipse, that same fear would never again seize them, unless they experienced the very same darkening of the sun.

The sun had now come back—the sun shone today. *Sila pinaka!* "It was a good day!"

This careless attitude was reflected in their reception

of the preacher's teachings. When first they heard him speak, they listened eagerly. Once the novelty of his message wore off, their interest lagged, especially when they realized that this message was more than just an entertaining story—that it was a two-edged spear that probed deep into their own hearts and demanded a change, a turning away from sin.

Guilty fear prompted by their own consciences had sent them running to the preacher when the sun was darkened. Their hearts then quaked with mingled fear of the demons of their heathen beliefs and the thought that this might be the doomsday of which the preacher had warned them.

But now that the sun shone again, they settled back into their spiritual "safety." There was no pressing need of mending their ways, of getting ready to meet a God who required a cleansing of the heart through regeneration, through salvation purchased by His Son. The sun shone today, time enough for such things later!

They had no liking for this idea that they were sinners in need of salvation, not while the sun shone and good health was their lot. For generations they had been of the opinion that the Greenlanders were *the* people, that other peoples were inferior. So they looked upon the white Kablunaks with condescension. These were people of the same race as those who had earlier been exterminated from the land. This Kablunak preacher's message was not flattering to the individual ego, did not encourage vanity, and so was distasteful, something to be ignored as much and as long as possible.

For Fredrik Christian they had much respect, but no desire to become like him. He wore their kind of clothing, spoke their language, understood their ways, yet he was no longer one of their people. His person was as

clean as that of the preacher, of the preacher's sons. He washed himself! Bathing of the body was not encouraged by the Angakoks, it was an act which, for some reason, invited the ire of the evil spirits.

Fredrik Christian lived almost as much in the native huts as he did in the Egede house; wherever he could aid the preacher there was Fredrik Christian. The natives observed that this member of their own race had adopted the same strange modesty of the white men, he did not lie down to sleep stark naked as they did. Though he was of marriageable age, he did not look upon any of the young women with desire to make one his wife. For the pagan Greenlander, this was difficult to understand. Fleshly lusts, physical power and bravery in the hunt, these were the fundamentals in their way of life.

But these things were no longer important to this Greenlander who had become like the preacher! For him there seemed nothing so important as to talk about the Jesus-God and His redeeming love. This Jesus-God that you could not see, that you could not touch as you could whale blubber or a harpoon.

There was no ceremony of Putting Out the Lights when Fredrik Christian lodged in a hut. This was something to do when this Native-Turned-Kablunak was not there. No need for his words of reprimand, Fredrik Christian's own chastity forbade lustful behavior in his presence.

Often and often, Hans knelt in prayers of thanksgiving for this first convert. Always he pleaded, "O Lord, send Thy Word into some other Greenlander's heart and make of him another Fredrik Christian!"

The summer of 1727 brought two ships from Bergen with the news that the Bergen trading company had

finally dissolved. The loss of two ships in addition to an unprofitable barter had resulted in the merchants' complete withdrawal from Greenland commerce.

Hans regretted the failure of the trading enterprise, for the Bergen company was responsible for the establishment of his mission. While the ships of the previous summer had brought almost the same news, the trading company at that time had not disbanded; now the expected dissolution was reality.

He felt a vast relief that he could plan his future without any possible obligations to the business of trade. Continued support of the Good Hope Mission was promised by King Frederick IV and the Mission College at Kjobenhavn; with this last ship had come a representative from the king to inspect the mission station and to report on its progress and needs.

The joy of his liberation from commercial obligations, however, was mingled with the sadness of parting now with Reverend Albert Top. Broken in health from his four years of work among the Greenlanders, the assistant was no longer able to remain with a people he had learned to love.

Loved above all the brown-skinned ones was the young man who carried the sick minister's belongings down to the boat waiting to go to the ship. At length, when the bags were in the boat, and Hans Egede and his family had bid Albert Top farewell, Fredrik Christian looked away to the white-sailed ship anchored out in Hope Sea.

He turned, tears coursing down his slanted dark eyes. Between the two, the white man and the Greenlander convert was an enduring bond. Albert Top and Fredrik Christian were not merely good friends, but each had been able to give to the other what he most needed. The boy taught the missionary the language and a way of

life he must know in order to preach the gospel to the Greenlanders; Albert Top brought Fredrik Christian to the feet of his Saviour, and the brown boy learned the peace that passed all his understanding. Then this friend had baptized him.

There were no words eloquent enough to express what was in each heart. Silently, with streaming eyes, they looked at one another. Then the wan missionary stepped into the waiting boat.

Tears stung in the eyes of Hans and Gertrude. For them this parting was a foretaste of something that would cut even deeper into their hearts, a year hence. It would be time then for Paul to leave them. Paul, the first born, the first great treasure of their life together.

Paul stood upon the threshold of his manhood already. His was the right to return to the homeland, to enter the University there and prepare for whatever work he chose.

Yes, one more year to cherish the companionship of his son, one more year of sitting with him over Latin and history and literature texts, and then—farewell.

Soon it would be Nils to go, then Kristine, and last, sunny little Solveig!

In Paul's heart was a love for the Greenlanders and a growing concern for their salvation. When he was home again in Norway and Denmark, would new interests and new friends dissuade him from any yearnings he might have to return to Greenland and take his father's mantle upon him?

Chapter 20

THE KING'S GREAT interest in the Greenland Mission was evidenced the following summer when three ships arrived at Good Hope. Two of these were outfitted at Bergen, the third came directly from Kjobenhavn, the capital. On board were two young missionaries, Henrik Milzoug and Otto Lange, additional colonists, also soldiers to man a proposed fort at Nepisene.

On board the battleship *Marianen* was the man to serve as first governor of Greenland, Major Claus Enevold Paars. With him was Captain Landorph in command of the soldiers.

Besides provisions of food and clothing, the three ships brought necessary equipment and lumber for building the Nepisene fort and additional houses at Good Hope.

Having previously found a more suitable location for his colony several miles inland on the same fjord, Hans had that same spring begun the construction of a house of turf and stone. It was now decided that the new houses would be built at this location, that the old ones should be wrecked and their timbers used again at the new post.

At the house that would soon be dismantled, Hans

watched Gertrude pack a trunk for Paul. Gently, she laid each of his belongings into it as though each garment were a treasure she might not again behold, also the sealskin kamiks and trousers and the caribou timiak which Paul wanted to take to show his friends in Denmark and Norway.

The trunk was filled. There was no more that Gertrude could do for her son. On August 7, Paul and Nils carried it down to the waiting boat, and it was time to say farewell.

Hans looked at Gertrude and was reminded of a Mary who "treasured all these things in her heart." While Gertrude wanted her son to leave, rejoiced that he had decided to train as a pastor and return to Greenland to help his father, yet there was a gnawing in her heart. Flesh of her flesh, it was hard to see Paul go even for a time.

A brief clasp of his son's hand, a choking, "God be with you, my Paul!" and Hans watched his son step briskly into the boat and row away to the ship.

Already aboard the ship were five Christian natives Paul was bringing with him to Denmark in response to an invitation from the king. Among these were Poek and his wife.

It was necessary for Hans to spend much time in counsel with Governor Paars and in general to help the colonists, so work on his own new house was slackened. And it was time-consuming labor to rear the walls of stone and turf, to transport timbers from Hope Island and to hoist them again as the new rooftree.

With roof gone from the old house, and no roof stretched over the new one, Gertrude set up housekeeping in the boat which had been given to Hans. A canvas was

stretched for a roof, but autumn winds and rains, and even snow, soon made life in the boat a miserable existence.

Clumsy though it was, Hans had learned to respect the construction of native huts. Now he also built his walls thick, and of sod and stone. But he had no desire for the Greenland type of roof. This was most often of walrus skins stretched over an awkward framework of driftwood and saplings, then covered with slabs of earth; upon this, water was dashed to freeze and make a snug roof during frigid weather, but one that dripped constantly when warmer days returned. No, he would build a roof such as his fishermen parishioners at Lofoten adopted, a roof of sod laid upon birch bark.

Hans did not work alone at his house. Nils and the native sons brought willing hands to the task. Even Gertrude and the two daughters found much to do. Though the two young missionaries were also of their household, Hans insisted that they use their time for learning the Greenlandic language, so they could the sooner be ready to work among the natives.

Unfortunately, the majority of the colonists who were expected to remain permanently in Greenland now were men and women who had been released from prisons and reformatories on condition that they go with Governor Paars to the new world to live! The women among them had agreed to marry and had taken their ex-convict husbands by lot.

If these new colonists came at all to the worship of God, it was only under orders from the governor or the captain. They were a hardened lot, men who had been serving sentences for theft, for assault, and even for murder. The women had been thieves and prostitutes, loose-moraled at best.

The soldiers were anything but pious. Adventurers, they were, of many nationalities. The carpenters and tradesmen who had come along were characterized by a spirit of daring and adventure, not by spiritual relationship with Christ.

These were the products of Christian civilization which the heathen Greenlanders were now to observe. Hans Egede's heart was heavy with dismay.

The entire company of soldiers was to remain at Good Hope through the winter. They would migrate to Nepisene in early spring.

It was not until late in October, when the icy winter blasts made life in the tents impossible, that sufficient dwellings were completed to house all the people of Good Hope.

On the 10th of October, Hans baptized the first white child born at the mission, the daughter of one of the soldiers. On the following day, the king's birthday was celebrated, and the governor entertained the pastor and his friends. The cannon salute to his majesty terrified the natives.

Loose-lived, careless in personal habits, given to much drunkenness, the colonists were easy prey to the siege of influenza that came with the extreme cold. Before November had passed, several had died of it.

On New Year's Day, 1729, Hans preached a sermon to which only a few of the colonists listened with willing ears. Most of them were more interested in the marriage ceremony which was to follow, that of a soldier and a newly-made widow for whom Ole Lange read the rites. They were also more interested in hearing about the colonist who had attempted suicide in the sea.

They did not care to talk about those who had died, nor those who appeared deathly ill. They were gloomy

and morose a few days later when both a widow and a soldier died.

"The Kablunaks will all die," prophesied a native to the preacher. "The Kablunaks are under the spell of the Angakok who lives at Pisubigmee. Even the preacher will die. Every night this great Angakok weaves his magic spell over the Kablunaks. Every night the people of his hut hear him howl to Tongarsuk to drive the Kablunaks out of the land. And Tongarsuk will drive the Kablunaks out. With death spirits, Tongarsuk will drive all the Kablunaks away!"

"No," replied Hans. "I shall not die. I shall not die until the Good Lord calls me. I shall not die simply because your crazy Angakok hates me and my people, and wants to drive us out."

"The preacher *will* die!" insisted the Greenlander. "This one is the greatest of all our Angakoks. His magic is so powerful that all upon whom he has ever cast his spell, have died."

Behind this Greenlander stood his companion, his eyes resting not unkindly upon the missionary. He was a man Hans had befriended. Earnestly, compassionately, he repeated. "Yes, the preacher shall die. The preacher and all his people. Long, long ago the Angakoks drove your kindred people from the land, now again the Angakoks cast their spells upon the Kablunaks. Soon there will be only mounds of turf and stone to mark where the Kablunak houses stood."

Chapter 21

SURELY THE PEOPLE of Sodom and Gomorrah were no more wicked than these associates who spurned his spiritual ministrations! Even when Hans brought food to the sick some snarled their resentment of him. He was the man responsible for establishing this outpost in the Arctic wilderness, hence the man responsible for this hell of cold and fever and haunting death.

Some of the ex-convicts and hired soldiers had been victims of misfortunes that left them bitter and disillusioned. The few of those released from prison who sincerely desired a new lease on life, were stunned into pessimism and irritability as the long winter night wrapped its black mantle about the land.

Imprisoned by the frigid cold and the murderous foehn winds, besieged in their own dwellings by spreading illness, the men looked with desperate hope upon the one ship anchored in Hope Sea. Mutiny spread secretly among them until a plot was discovered against the lives of Hans and Nils Egede. When the instigator was handcuffed, he revealed also plots upon the lives of Governor Paars and Captain Landorph.

With what loyal men remained, watch was kept day and night, and Hans wrote in his diary:

"How tragic that we must guard our lives against our own people! Here we have lived peacefully among the heathen for years, have lain down to sleep without fear of being molested. Now men of our own race want to kill us. Indeed, if a providential God had not laid most of these wicked men upon sick beds, it is doubtful that I should have lived to pen these words."

Early in the winter, Hans urged that the sick be removed to the warmer native huts where his Greenlander converts would care for them. Several of those who were ill consented to this; and, despite the unsanitary conditions of the huts, all recovered.

At the colony, the middle of winter found so many of the colonists bedridden that there were hardly enough left to do the household chores. By the first of April, forty of the most profligate colonists were dead.

With a callousness that astounded Hans and his helpers, those who lost their mates quickly chose others. Hardly knowing what was the right thing to do, the clergymen performed the wedding ceremonies.

Hans found some solace in his visits among the natives. Little by little, the seed he had planted in their hearts was growing; and he found among the youth especially a real desire to heed the gospel message. Unclean though they still remained in their personal habits, all their uncleanness was not so despicable to Hans, as the moral and spiritual filth he beheld among the white men.

He was much disappointed in finding in one household that professed Christian faith the continued practise of the ancient sex orgy of Putting Out the Lights. Hans reprimanded them sternly. Penitent, the men and women promised reform. But the lustful habits of a lifetime, the

preacher realized, could not easily be abandoned. Only the regeneration of the heart could work the miracle, no outward profession was sufficient.

Long and earnestly, Hans and his assistants prayed to the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength for bringing Christ to the Greenlanders despite all obstacles. Their experiences taught them that their most fruitful work was among the young, among those who had not already formed habits of lust and indifference. Upon the youth, therefore, they would concentrate their efforts.

The well-educated and intelligent helpers, Milzoug and Lange, made rapid progress in learning the native tongue. Here again, Fredrik Christian labored unstintingly. The native boy's heart burned for the spiritual blindness of his people. Feeling that he himself was inadequate as a spiritual counsellor, he was the more eager to see these trained pastors ready to preach to his own people.

Spring brought not only liberation from the influenza that had scourged the colony, but the freedom to work. Once more, Hans was to see an expedition set out to locate the Viking settlement which he believed existed on the East Coast.

In 1724, as a result of his letters to the king, two ships had been sent from Norway to explore the East Coast, to attempt the penetration of the ice barrier there. The failure of the large vessels to get through the ice stream convinced the Danes and Norwegians at home, and Hans in Greenland, that the only way to reach the Eastern settlement was to cross the great icecap that saddled the land.

This crossing was to be done with horses. A number of these had been brought on Governor Paar's ship, but not one survived the winter. Now the Governor and

seven companions left Good Hope, sailed up Ameralik Fjord until they reached the great arm of Inland Ice that Hans had crossed when Nernak led him to the Viking ruins.

Governor Paars started up the great expanse of ice, but soon turned back[1] after finding it serrated with crevasses ten to twenty feet in width, and of unknown depths. Crevasses that would be of greater size as they progressed inland. Crevasses that were often treacherously covered with a thin roof of frosted ice and snow. Crevasses that had swallowed even the wary Eskimo hunting caribou.

After the return to Good Hope, the Governor left with his entire company to build the fort at Nepisene. Lange went with them, and was later followed by Milzoug. At Good Hope only the trader and a few men remained with Hans and his family.

Nils begged his father to allow him to accompany the trader on bartering excursions. Nils spoke the native tongue with the fluency of a Greenlander, and he was well liked by all the Eskimos. He might, therefore, be of much help to the trader.

But Hans no longer felt any direct obligation to help with the trade. This man was operating an independent business. Furthermore, Nils had an aptitude for teaching the native children. Since it was summer, however, most of the natives were away from the Ameralik Fjord vicinity. On these trading excursions, Nils would be sure to meet many of the natives. Perhaps he could both help with the trade and teach!

With this understanding, Hans allowed Nils to go with the trader.

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[1] First successful crossing of the Inland Ice was completed in this same vicinity 161 years later by Nansen in 1890.

At home, Hans sat by the hour teaching the brown-skinned youth who had become as a son to him. Fredrik Christian read fluently from his Norwegian Bible, was spiritually matured, and possessed an understanding of the Scriptures to qualify him as a catechist or teacher.

But when Hans requested him to go alone to teach the Word of God to his fellowmen, Fredrik Christian was overcome with humility.

He was only a Greenlander! How could he go out and teach like the preacher?

He loved the Lord Jesus, did he not? Surely he wanted his people to know Christ even as he did? Could he not go out as his friend Paul had gone?

But did he not need more training?

Always, Hans explained, a man of God must grow in his knowledge of the Scriptures. But he must not wait for a perfect knowledge, which could not come, before beginning his work as a servant of the Lord.

And so Fredrik Christian journeyed in his kayak across the waters of Ameralik Fjord to a family where the father lay ill in his tent. He taught the sick man's children, even the man and his wife. They listened to him with great respect. Encouraged and exultant that he could thus be of service, he no longer held back.

Hans often set out in one direction, his foster-son in another, upon a farther journey. Hans rowed his boat; Fredrik Christian skimmed the surface of the water with incredible speed in his kayak.

The missionary's heart sang when at the end of a day, he could look out from his doorstep and see the long brown kayak nosing homeward, steered by the first native missionary worker.

When the trader returned to Good Hope with his first

cargo of hides and walrus tusks, he was enthusiastic in his praise of Nils.

"Never have I been able to do so much good trading," he told Hans. "If the Greenlanders have anything at all to trade, they'll trade it to Nils."

From natives Hans met on a trip northward, he had a report concerning this son that pleased him even more.

"Nese," they said, "when Nese trade, he talk of something more than blubber. Nese can tell us about the Creator."

Chapter 22

IT WAS LATE in the summer of 1730 before provisions, and letters from Paul, arrived. Then a battleship came, and with it, orders from the king that the governor and all the soldiers be evacuated from Greenland the following spring. His Highness had decided that the Greenlanders were such a peaceful people that there was no need of military force against them. With this, Hans was in hearty accord. Whatever his faults, the average Greenlander was far less harmful than the European that inhabited the waters and shores of the country.

The king had a new plan in progress, that of bringing Icelandic people to colonize Greenland. Accustomed as they were to life in a frigid zone, they could readily adapt themselves to Greenland conditions. On board the battleship was lumber to help rebuild the old Viking homes along Ameralik Fjord; for here on the deserted farms, the Icelandic subjects of King Frederick IV would cultivate the land and raise cattle and sheep. The thought of pleasant fields greening again where the Vikings had cleared stone and rock gladdened Hans' heart.

In late October, Hans went northward. When lodging one night at a winter hut, he was surprised to meet a

Greenlander who was on his way with a message to him from the people of Kekertarssuak Island!

"Tell the preacher, say my people, to come north to Kekertarssuak. Here the preacher should set up his dwelling place. Here is a kind land in which to live. Here more people are living than where he now lives. If the preacher's people want to trade with us we shall do so gladly. The preacher shall get all the barter and more that the sailors now get, for they cannot tell us anything of importance. They speak only of blubber. We, too, want to be taught about the Great Creator."

How could he refuse such an invitation? Surely, it was an open door to further the Kingdom of Christ! The messenger from Kekertarssuak urged him to return with him. There would be no need for the preacher to build a house of his own. They would have lodging for him, and food.

And again, Hans heard of the wonders of the South Land Gone North.

Having knowledge chiefly of hunter's craft, the Greenlander ambassador from Kekertarssuak could hardly know how economically important his Big Island was; from the standpoint of plant life and climate, it had many features Hans realized would be of great benefit to the establishment of a mission colony there. The various reports he had heard about the locality corroborated one another; surely there must be much truth in them.

He knew, however, that his first obligation was to the mission post he had already established at Good Hope. The conversion of the Greenlanders was not something that could be done quickly; it would require years. He must not be cut off from the natives he had now taught for several winters; the fields at Good Hope were just whitening unto harvest.

Remembering the revilings of the Angakoks and their followers, the scoffing and the scorn, the indifference that still continued among the Ameralik Fjord natives, Hans yearned also to go to these who promised fertile ground for the sowing of the Word. A more temperate land in which to live, a locality where meat was far more abundant, these were factors that secretly tugged at Hans, urged him to go to the Big Island.

But instead, he sent Nils and Fredrik Christian there to teach until such time as an ordained missionary could be obtained. Milzoug and Lange were still needed in the Nepisene area.

At Good Hope, Hans strove to enroll children in his school. Steadily, his conviction had grown that in the youth lay the greatest hope for the spread of the gospel. Like Fredrik Christian, Uminguak was a lad of promise. He, too, could read fluently; he was well-grounded in the Scriptures. An earnest young Christian, he would make an excellent catechist. A few more years now and a second kayak would skim over Greenland waters to bring the Bread of Life to the brown-skinned people.

Hans was able to procure the three sons of a widow after he convinced her that he had no intention of keeping the boys from her permanently; she could bring them home again in a month's time, for a short vacation. Promptly, at the end of the month, the mother appeared and took her children home.

When Hans went to fetch the boys for their second term of school, the mother had them hidden. Only her little girls were in sight. They were not so valuable; they would only grow up to be women; they would never hunt seal or kill the mighty walrus.

Hans' experiences in keeping pupils were often exasperating. Sometimes a child had the benefit of only one

day's instruction when the parents withdrew him. Or he might stay a week or two. Despite many failures to keep children in regular attendance, Hans did manage to get three orphans to come to school every day—by keeping two of them, a boy and a girl, in his own house; the second girl stayed at the house of the trader. They were all of tractable natures and soon were adopted and christened. Paul, Clara, and Sophie were the new names given them.

In May, Hans went with the warship to Nepisene. Here the soldiers prepared to evacuate the fort. It was granted that colonists who so wished could remain at the post and continue trading, but none did.

From a Dutch ship trading in the vicinity came the tragic news that King Frederick IV was dead. The monarch had been a zealous Christian and a staunch supporter of mission work, and Hans realized that his strongest ally for the Greenland work was gone. Paul had written to his father telling how he had frankly reported to the king that there had been no great results in Greenland despite all the struggle and effort, that he could report only a handful of converts. Thereupon a nobleman present protested that the returns from the money invested in the Greenland mission were so insignificant that the mission should be abandoned. The king replied: "If only one soul has been won, not too much has been devoted to this work."

What would be the attitude of Frederick's successor?

Hans did not have long to wait. Only a few days later, a Danish warship arrived, sent by the new king, Christian V. The message cut deep into the missionary's heart.

The Greenland colonies were to be abandoned completely, fort and mission. There would be no further support, no more provisions.

Chapter 23

HAD ALL HIS striving been in vain? Must he leave the little children, the young men and women who showed that the seed was bearing fruit? Hans knew that it was not true as the king asserted, that the colony had been unsuccessful in Christianizing the natives.

There must be time for the seed to grow! Hearts could not be regenerated in one great mass movement. Each individual must be reached, each one must learn his personal need of a Saviour.

The preacher's heart was torn with anguish as he set out in his small boat for Good Hope and his beloved Gertrude. Behind him were those already dismantling the fort, loading its equipment upon the ships. Later, they would come to Good Hope to do the same there.

Seven days later, his weary hand pushed open the door of his own home. Joy, as always, greeted his arrival. Kristine and Solveig, young women now, threw glad arms about him.

But he looked over their shoulders to Gertrude, her greying braid haloing her head. She came slowly toward him. She would not throw her arms impetuously about him; she might not even kiss him.

But in her heart brimmed a love that could not be expressed by an emotional embrace, by even the most endearing of words. It was there always, though. Constant. Unflinching. When every other earthly comfort and help might fail him, Gertrude's love was there to succor.

No joy of his was completely enjoyed and experienced until that moment when he shared it with her. She not only brightened his hours of happiness, but her tenderness and understanding halved his disappointments and sorrows.

Among men, he was unswerving in his convictions. The snarling threats of the vilest of Angakoks had never frightened him. Only the Lord knew his moments of weakness—the Lord and Gertrude.

And always she gave him new courage and strength.

He found all in his house as he had left it. The trunks were still in the loft. Gertrude knew of the king's ultimatum, for the battleship had stopped at the colony before proceeding to Nepisene. They had been miles apart, but each knew what the other had decided.

They would stay. Let the king withdraw his men, his support, his provisions, but they would stay.

Yet, every ship throughout the years had brought letters from Gertrude's relatives, pleading for her to return to them soon. They warned her she could not linger much longer in Greenland before her uncles and aunts would be gone. And Gertrude loved her kinfolk. She yearned for them.

What was the need, though, of exposing Gertrude and the girls to the harsh existence awaiting those who dared remain in Greenland without continued provisions from the homeland? No, they should go home to Norway. He

would remain, and probably Nils for a few years. He must convince Gertrude that she should go.

"You have not begun to pack?" he inquired of her.

"To return to Norway?" Gertrude's eyes almost blazed.

Hans nodded.

"You! Are you planning to leave Greenland, with the others?" Tender concern was in her voice.

"No. Not I. But you. You and the girls, you should go home now. I cannot leave my—"

"Nor can I, Papa!"

In the doorway stood the little brown orphans who had scurried down from a near-by hill to greet their foster-father. Gertrude's eyes were tearless, but she swallowed hard as she looked at them. Hans smiled at the shining, round little faces. Clean-skinned, grinning widely, their eyes told the love and confidence they had for this wan man. Eagerly now, they clambered about him, the smallest one crawling into his lap.

Hans had rested no more than an hour when Augo, already returned to Ameralik Fjord for the winter, entered the house. He was followed by Olabi and Tukajak and a score of others from the nearest settlement.

"Augo has heard," said Augo, "that the preacher and all his people must leave the land, that the great king of the Kablunaks has so commanded. Augo and his people must know why the king has done this."

"The king," said Hans, "does not feel that the preacher and his helpers are of much worth here. He does not believe that Augo's people have given heed to the words of the preacher. The king thinks that the preacher can do more good in his own land; for there the people have respect for his words."

"It is not so!" Augo stoutly declared, indignation and hurt throbbing in his voice. "They are liars who have

told the king that Augo's people have not respect for the preacher's words."

Tukajak, good friend of Nils, stepped forward.

"It is true, then, that the preacher and his people are going away? Even Nese?"

"The king," said Hans, "tells the preacher that he will no longer send ships to Greenland with food and clothing for the preacher and his people. The preacher's people do not want to starve. So they are leaving Greenland."

"The preacher, he cannot go. He cannot leave Augo and his friends!" Augo's words were tense, clipped with emotion.

"No," said Hans, solemnly, "the preacher cannot go. The preacher cannot leave Augo and his friends. The preacher loves Augo's people. The preacher will stay."

Assembled about Hans Egede were the governor, the soldiers' commander, the ships' captains, the soldiers and all the colonists. With the eloquence of sincerity, he had told them of his decision to remain.

"Only a fool," charged one of the soldiers, "would consider staying here."

"Then am I a fool," replied Hans. "A fool for God's sake and for the sake of the Greenlanders. I cannot find it in my heart to leave the Greenlanders now that the seed of the Word has been sown in their hearts. Some of them I have baptized; I cannot leave them to fall back into heathen ways. Yes, I shall remain. Even more, my wife refuses to leave Greenland. My son Nils, too."

There was no further remonstrance from the assembly. They knew that no argument would swerve this man who had suffered more hardship than any of them in this stern land.

Now Hans pointed out that it would not be possible

to load all the goods, equipment, provisions and the population of the colony on the two ships. The buildings and much of the goods must be left for Dutch sailors to destroy, or for the followers of the Angakoks to pilfer. It would even be necessary to leave behind food rations sufficient to feed a score of people for a year.

Surely then, Hans reasoned, His Majesty could not object if some chose to remain to protect the property from complete destruction. He pledged himself to guard the remaining cargo, and to reimburse in skins and furs the value of the provisions he and his family would need to use, the hides he would ship back on Dutch trading vessels. He would see, too, that such of the equipment left behind as the king might desire would later reach the homeland.

Hans sensed that his words met with the approval even of those who were unsympathetic with his work. To his great surprise, the governor agreed to allow ten volunteers to remain with Egede through the next year. In only a few minutes, ten men had lined up beside him, accepting him as their leader, accepting with him the hardships they knew awaited.

So it came to pass that on July 31, Hans and Gertrude watched the last ship sail out of sight down Ameralik Fjord. Gone were the governor, Captain Landorph, the soldiers, the colonists, traders and assistants, their women and children. With them also were six baptized natives who wanted to visit the land of the Kablunaks.

Again, Gertrude, and the daughters who refused to go from them, must be content with no other women but themselves to chat about recipes and knitting, and the problems of a Greenland household. For Hans there was no longer the companionship of the other pastors, Milzoug and Lange. Good friends they had been, too.

But there was Fredrik Christian. And Uminguak, baptized Peter, Sophie, Clara, and the brown-skinned Paul. And from the islands and mainland came a steady trickle of Greenlander friends.

They knew that the preacher was alone now, that his helpers were gone. He could not come to all of them now to teach them of the Christian way of life. So they would come to the preacher's dwelling place to be taught of him there! Gladly did the preacher read to them the Scripture passages he had translated. And gladly did the people hear him.

From Nepisene, natives came bringing news that the buildings there had again been destroyed by the Dutch sailors. Not only had the Kablunak dwellings been demolished, but even the Greenlander huts in the vicinity had been molested. Truly it was wrong, said these messengers, that the preacher's people had left the land; now the Greenlanders had no protection against the assaults of unfriendly Europeans.

Once more winter settled upon the land. And in the preacher's home, the darkness of sorrow gripped his heart. Uminguak was dead, after a brief and sudden illness.

Augo and Olabi and Tukajak stood silently by as the preacher and his family laid their adopted son to rest where white men were buried. Augo and his people walked now without wailing and loud shrieking down the straight path from the cemetery. Home to their huts they returned to speak tenderly of this Kablunak maker of words, who had become as one of their own people.

Not long after this, Hans was able to go to a settlement quite far from the colony and lodged there several days to teach. These were people who had never come to him for instruction. So he had yearned to see them, to know that they were not forgetting the gospel truths

they had been taught. Eager he was to teach them more, to bring them under the conviction of their sins, to bring them the joy of salvation.

He was glad when they heard him with much interest, showed him greater respect than ever before. Yet there was among them those who had once been the followers of the Angakok he had imprisoned.

They could speak now with words they had never known before. Not words like matak or blubber, the names of things that could be touched. But words that spoke of the things that are not seen—of faith, forgiveness, gratitude, hope, and love.

Love, brotherly love, was theirs, not fleshly passion, but the fruit of a man's spirit. The preacher had taught them what it meant to love one's neighbor, for they perceived that *he* loved his neighbor, his brown-skinned neighbor, even more than himself. He had forsaken a more pleasant land than theirs, and he had come to live in a harsh and miserly land because he loved them. And he had not deserted them, even when all of his people had deserted him!

Now they began to believe that another, the Son of the living God could also be so filled with such love that He would forsake His heavenly home and die for those who needed Him.

"There will always be plenty of seal meat and caribou and blubber to keep the preacher with us," they told Hans Egede.

Chapter 24

WHEN THE SHORES of Ameralik Fjord were gay with nodding poppies, and the sun laved Hans Egede's land with almost continuous light, a white-sailed Danish ship anchored in the harbor of Good Hope!

Doubtless, it had come to retrieve the ten men who had remained with him—and to insist that the missionary return to a more comfortable parish in Norway.

Hans knew that his health was weakening. But neither his heart nor his mind could seduce him from Greenland.

At any rate, there was a considerable cargo of walrus tusks and hides stored at Good Hope and waiting for transport to Denmark. And there were fish.

To Hans' great joy, he soon learned that the king, inspired by the missionary's devotion and courage, had decided to give personal support to the mission. He had also sent a trader to be in charge of barter. Hans was to be official head of the colony.

With a greater cargo of fish and fur than any previous home-going ship had carried, the Danish vessel left Good Hope. Love, not fish hooks and bright beads, had brought an abundance of furs and fish, and seal meat and caribou, to the dwelling place of the preacher.

The king sent also a man by the name of Mathias Jochimsen to explore for precious minerals and for the Eastern Settlement.

From time to time, Hans had sent various minerals to Europe for examination. He had even interested himself in the study of chemistry and goldsmithing since it was believed that gold and silver were hidden treasures in Greenland. He realized that the more valuable Greenland became to the homeland, the more likelihood there was of continued financial support of the mission.

Nothing, however, that Hans had ever sent to Denmark proved to be of worth. After one of his chemical experiments had nearly poisoned the entire household, he cast his chemist's equipment into the sea as too dangerous for a layman to use.

Jochimsen was a Norwegian familiar with mountain climbing. Shortly after arriving at Good Hope, he led his party into the surrounding territory. But when winter brought their activities to an end, they had made no new discoveries.

Early the next spring, they set out by boat for southern Greenland, hoping to find there a stretch of Inland Ice narrow enough to permit crossing to the East Coast. This would enable them to proceed up the coast to locate the Eastern Settlement.

Jochimsen found one of his plans, that of capturing and training caribou as pack animals, impractical. On skis, he and his men started over the treacherous ice dome; they advanced only a short distance when his men refused to go farther. They claimed that they would not get back to Good Hope before the ship should sail for Europe. Greatly disappointed, but unable to go on alone, Jochimsen had to return to Good Hope and report to Hans that his project had failed.

Not long after Jochimsen's departure for Europe, Hans talked to an old woman who had been on several trips up along the East Coast.

Were there any Kablunaks living there?

No. There were no signs of Kablunaks on the East Coast. No such Kablunak dwellings as she had often seen in southwestern Greenland.

The Vikings, Hans knew, had built along the inland fjords. This woman had skirted only the mouths of the fjords. Neither had she gone far up the coast.

With the ship, that summer of 1733, came the welcome news that King Christian V was becoming increasingly interested in Greenland and its mission. He now promised the Good Hope mission an annual stipend of 2000 *rigsdaler*. He promised, also, that the Greenland trade would be pursued with vigor.

But the ship also brought the tragic report that only Karl remained alive of the six Greenlanders who had gone to Denmark in 1731. And Karl seemed emaciated as he stepped once more upon Greenland earth.

Hans thought sadly of Poek and his companions. They had gone with Paul in 1728, and none of them had returned. Within a year, all had died of an illness physicians were unable to diagnose.[1]

Karl was home but a short while when he became ill. Exactly what ailed him, Hans and Gertrude could not understand. He was chilled, complained of aches in his back and head. His breath was foul; he began to scratch

[1] Until the advent of white men in Greenland, Eskimos were comparatively free of such diseases as tuberculosis, measles and smallpox. For the past two centuries, tuberculosis has been a major scourge there. Colds and influenza ordinarily do not trouble Eskimos; even Americans living in Greenland find immunity from such ailments, but are especially susceptible when they return home.

and claw as a rash broke out on his face and spread over his body.

Gertrude strove to comfort him, hardly knowing what to do. Then to the horror of Hans and his wife, Sara, one of their adopted children, sickened. Three days later, she was dead.

Sophie, too, now broke out with the rash, lay feverish, and was always thirsty.

And a stench began to fill the immaculate house of Gertrude Egede.

One September morning, Karl died. Hans and Fredrik Christian carried the young man up to the cemetery to lay him beside Sara.

And now Hans beheld on the face of the beloved catechist bright red macules such as had disfigured Sara and Karl!

Chapter 25

SIX DAYS LATER, Fredrik Christian lay dead.

Broken-hearted, Hans laid his beloved brown son away, beside Karl and Sara and Uminguak.

And now as he stood beside the sickbed of the brown one christened Paul, he knew that the dread scourge, smallpox, had come home with Karl.

Tribulation was upon the Greenlanders! Upon the Egede family, the entire colony!

Quickly now, he must gather to his own house those who were ill of the disease. He must keep them from those who were well. He must prevent the pestilence from spreading.

But that very day a native arrived from a near-by island to report that two boys who had visited with the natives at the colony had become suddenly ill, and in a few days were dead.

Hans knew that he could not go out on preaching tours lest he carry the disease. And already there was need of his help at home. Gertrude and his daughters needed aid in their ministrations of the sick in their own house and in the huts close by—huts that held a new and terrible

stench of retching odors of pus and vomit and blood-filled sputum, of running sores from ears and mouth.

Death was no stranger at the colony now!

From a near-by settlement where five men had died that same week, a man and two women came to the preacher's house begging shelter. One woman bore a little child, its face swollen and marked. Fright tore at their hearts as they came to the one man in whom they had complete trust.

The preacher would help them, they knew, so they had come to him, even as four of their people had fled from the same hut to another settlement.

To spread contagion there, Hans thought bitterly.

On Sunday, even as he preached, men came from Fox Island to plead for medicine to drive away this evil biting of the skin. At their settlement, three men lay dead, five more were dying.

Only a few days after, four others came from Fox Island. They must stay with the preacher in his house! Where else would they be safe from the scourge?

Already one of them was deathly sick. But while they distraughtly told that six more of their people had died, that others were fleeing in every direction, Hans and Gertrude made room for them in their crowded house.

A second horrible tale they also bore, of a man who had murdered his own wife in revenge for her hexing their children with this spotted evil. His son had lain delirious before his death, crying out that it was his own mother who had stood over him, smiting him with the evil of red spots. Enraged and overcome with grief over the loss of both his sons, the father sank his saber into the mother even as she pleaded for mercy.

Then he cast her into the sea after the manner of disposing of witches.

Desperately, Gertrude and Kristine and Solveig washed their clothing in grim effort to avoid contamination. But even as death robbed a bed of its occupant, just so surely was there another to be laid upon it.

Nils hurried off to Hope Island to fetch a native and his family. The man had become ill; then, delirious and frightened, he had fled, his family with him. Thus far, Hope Island had not been exposed to the disease. But when Nils arrived there, the man was already dead, his wife infected.

Fortunately, they had not found lodging with other natives, but were given shelter in a hut by themselves. Nils took the young widow, her children, and a maiden relative, into his boat. Before they reached their destination, the mother was dead. Nils and the young girl carried the little children up to the big house of turf and stone—to give to Gertrude Egede more little orphans to mother.

One day the girl said to Nils, "The pestilence will come upon me soon. Tell me more about this Kingdom of God of which the preacher always speaks. What shall we find when we go hence? And what shall we eat and drink?"

And Nils taught her concerning the place where there is no eating and drinking for there is no hunger or thirst, no tears or wailing of anguish because there is no sorrow.

"It will not be so bad to die then," the girl replied, "and it is quickly done." A few days later, she was dead.

Now the pestilence walked in the darkness, stalked from hut to hut, a phantom ever pursuing the panic-stricken, who fled from one small settlement to another. Horror and fear and grief wrenched and tore and beat those who lived in the squalid, stench-filled huts.

After a trip to Koek Island through snow and satanic

wind, Nils found his efforts fruitless. He had gone to retrieve a smitten man who had fled there. Now he saw three of the huts no longer tenanted by the living. Many lay dead upon the sleeping platforms. Others lay, partly devoured by the dogs, out upon the ground. The living who remained had not the strength to carry the dead to the place of the mounds.

And there were those who had learned to pray.

They knelt in supplication, implored the God of the preacher to cleanse them of this seething curse.

Why did not the Lord God answer their prayers, they asked Nils. Had not the preacher told them to pray to God for all their needs, that God would answer the prayers of the believing?

His heart wrenched with pity, Nils explained that to God's will all must bow, that if it was not God's will they should live now, then they could most certainly know that for them that trusted in the Saviour there waited another life, a better life where there was not known pain or sorrow or hunger.

A better life. Yes, the Lord God was good, and they were His children; they would trust in Him.

From far up Ameralik Fjord, Nils brought a boat-load of eleven sick people. The first night they were in the preacher's house, an entire family of them died.

And from every direction came news of the pestilence stalking northward, southward.

In bitterest winter, a man came from Fox Island. He told of a young girl and her three little brothers living in a tent alone. They were waiting, these children and the girl, for the preacher to come and take them home to his dwelling.

Hans went there quickly, was amazed to find the four children still alive. Heartsick, he heard the girl's story.

The mother died first. Then the father was smitten, and the smallest brother. Knowing that they were both soon to die, the father wrapped his son close to his breast, then laid himself down in the place of the mounds. She must be sure, this daughter of his, to cover her father and her brother well with hides and with stones so that the white wolves and the jackals would not gnaw upon his body. And she must stay with the little ones, wait in the tent where there was seal meat enough until the preacher came.

For the preacher would come. He loved them. He had taught them, and baptized them.

When Hans returned with those four children, he found a tent pitched outside his house. The cold was so terrible that it was not possible for even strong people to live in the tent. He dragged the sick ones from the tent and into his overcrowded house.

Often Hans witnessed the strange custom of dressing for death. When a man knew that he was to die, he put on his very best clothes. It would not be meet to go into the new world with old clothes on. So now, over and over, Hans watched them, busy with their burial clothes.

Through the long night of winter, the stench of the sick and the dying filled the house where Hans and Gertrude and their children labored day and night, miraculously spared of any contagion themselves. Often at night, Hans got up from his bed to pull from the room another lifeless body. Out in the cold entry room he left it until morning. He dared not leave corpses in the house for fear of being poisoned by the engulfing stench and the putrefaction of sores and chronic excretions.

Before the winter ended, he had carried more than fifty bodies out from his house.

Only in the missionary's house was there admittance

for the sick natives. In the trader's house, in the house occupied by the sailors, no sick Greenlanders were permitted. None of the white people there could tolerate the stench of the sick, the unspeakable filth of running sores and scabs and excrement. It was suicidal, they said, to expose themselves thus.

The trader, with an eye for business, inspected the huts deserted by death. From them he brought furs and walrus tusks which the natives had abandoned. None of the living Greenlanders would touch the property of those who had died.

After the sun had returned with lengthening days, an old man lay dying in the reeking house of the preacher. This wizened one had never been a friend of the preacher; he had hearkened to the counsel of the Angakoks, and often he had railed and ridiculed the maker of words.

Penitent now, he lay upon the preacher's own bed.

"The preacher has been good to our people. The preacher has done for us what our own people would not do for us. The preacher has given us food to eat when we have had no food. The preacher has buried our dead, else they would have been prey to the dogs and the white wolves and the jackals.

"But best of all, the preacher has taught us of God. He has pointed us up the trail to the life everlasting. Now we can gladly die and wait upon the better life hereafter."

Chapter 26

ONCE AGAIN THE Midnight Sun released the land from the shackles of winter, and bright flowers decked the hills about Good Hope. The fragrance of blossoms was almost pungent, as Hans walked through a lush meadow. Plucking a poppy, he held it close to his nose, and remembered the first such flower he had picked, and with what joy, that first day he set foot upon Greenland's soil.

Fourteen years of toil and almost unbearable suffering, yet fourteen years that still had not been void of joy. Yes, it might seem to those who would read his next annual report to the Mission College that he had made small gain, indeed.

But only the Lord Almighty could know the fruits of His servant's labors in Greenland. Hans looked beyond the white-rimmed mountains and thought of Fredrik Christian, of Uminguak, Sara, Augo, those many other brown-skinned ones who had learned to love the Lord, had died in the Lord. They would be waiting for him, to greet him on the Other Side.

Hans squared his drooping shoulders and continued on his way. He must find the devastated clan of Oktok today.

But up from the fragrance of blossoms, came the stench of decay. There in the meadow lay another corpse, lying where the man had fallen as he fled the pestilence. Hans shuddered at the grisly sight, understood from the body's position that here was one more Greenlander who had vainly sought to reach the preacher's house.

Suddenly unable to bear any more of the multitude of reminders of the winter of horror, Hans broke down. Sobbing like a child, he stumbled away to a near-by knoll and let himself drop. For long moments he lay there, shaken with weeping. Then rising to his knees, he implored, "O God in Heaven, give me strength, even as Thou hast promised, strength for this day also!"

Even as he prayed, his mind moiled in a Gethsemane of thoughts. Of the two hundred Greenlander families who had lived within a radius of fifteen miles about Good Hope, only thirty now remained. The Sea of Hope did not, this spring, bear upon its glistening surface the bands of umiaks and kayaks going north. Only occasionally did one even see a small company of the ravaged people starting hopefully out for a summer of hunting and fishing. Kayaks that had been the pride of strong and skillful hunters lay abandoned in the sun.

And the jackals were not hungry this spring.

Yes, he had set out staunchly this morning to search for Oktok and his people. A year ago this same journey would have required but half a day; now at four in the afternoon, he had not reached his destination.

It was as though his shoes were weighted, weighted even as his heart was weighted with the searing memories of deserted huts and their grim contents, of the three corpses he had already buried that day.

Yes, he had strength enough to bury this one, too. A few weak moments on your knees, but you could stand

up again, and go on because the Lord was always there beside you, even as you covered the grisly bodies.

Hours later, he pushed open the door of his house, the dwelling place where now none lay with pus running from the ears, where none lay with skins red or purpling, where no longer was the horrible stench.

Behind him came the patter of little feet, the footsteps of little orphans who had survived their own parents and lived to know the mother love of Gertrude Egede, and the tenderness of the preacher who knew only to gather the little ones to his bosom.

He turned now to these little ones, embraced each one, and they scurried back to their happy play.

In the main room, there was no Gertrude or Kristine or Solveig to greet him. They were doubtless outside somewhere enjoying the warm sunshine. He would put his knapsack in his bedchamber and then go and find them.

But upon their bed, with Kristine bending over her, and Solveig standing by, lay Gertrude.

"Oh, my Gertrude!" Hans was instantly at her side. "Is it—?"

"No, Papa," said Kristine, reassuringly. "Mama does not have the smallpox. But she is very tired. Tired from the drag of winter—"

Hans' soiled hands clasped those of his wife. New strength ebbed back into him as she turned and smiled at him.

Exhausted she could certainly be. Only a young person, and one of strong constitution, could have endured the unceasing labors of the dreadful winter without penalty. Like a nightmare, Hans remembered the constant coming and going of natives throughout the months of the pestilence. Those who survived it moved to near-by

huts. Always there were others to take the place of those who were able to leave and of those who died.

Through it all there was Gertrude. Rest for her had been possible only in those brief interludes when there was a cessation of the cries of pain. There had been the feeding of the sick, often spooning the gruel into their mouths. And washing. Scrubbing while the bitter cold penetrated the house.

A few days of rest, and Gertrude was up and about her house again. But Hans saw plainly that she was not the same Gertrude who the year before had so joyously anticipated the return of the annual ship, the ship bringing with it Paul's letters.

She tired easily. Yet her intrepid spirit burned with the same glow, except that now she meekly assented to returning to Norway as soon as permission from the king was obtained. It would be a year before they could get a reply from the king. Another year, then, before they could even make plans to leave Greenland.

Paul was coming home this summer! Gertrude's tired eyes lighted at every mention of her son's homecoming.

A trained pastor now. He would make a better missionary than his father, Hans told Gertrude, happily. The Greenlanders loved him; he loved them and understood them. Paul talked with a Greenlander's tongue in his mouth! Yes, Hans could entrust his work to the capable hands of his son. With that surety, he could take Gertrude home to Norway.

But could he, himself, go home to Norway, accept some small parish there, and leave behind him his Greenlanders?

Now a new vision came to Hans, the dream of a new work for the cause of his Greenlanders. Even in the homeland there was much that he could do for his brown

people, much that he could do there to spread the gospel among them. He would train men to be missionaries to Greenland; while they learned their theology, they should also learn the Greenlanders' tongue that they might begin work without handicap as soon as they reached their mission field.

Doubtless he could be of even greater service thus to his beloved Greenlanders! Active work among them required young men of physical vigor and vitality. Yes, young men must be Paul's helpers in spreading the gospel throughout Greenland!

With great joy, Hans and Gertrude welcomed the white sails of the ship that brought back their son. They gloried at the very sight of him, a grown man now, strong and stalwart.

For Paul the joy at seeing his parents again was tinctured with sorrowful surprise.

"Mama!" he cried as he kissed the pale cheeks that no longer blossomed with her old spirit, "Mama, you are not well!"

And, looking past her at his father, he said, "Papa, you are *old!*"

Truly Hans felt old when the moment came that he must tell his son that there was no Fredrik Christian to welcome him home. Nor Uminguak. Nor Olabi. Eskias. Tukajak. Augo.

In stunned silence, Paul and the two young missionaries who had come with him, heard how the great tribulation had spread up and down the coast and winnowed thousands of Greenlanders into early graves.

With her son's return, Gertrude's health improved. But she talked happily and often of the old friends she would see, a year hence, home in Norway.

"Our own work here," she would assure Hans, "it is

finished. We are old now, Papa. Our years of usefulness in Greenland, they are over. It is good that our Paul is here to take your place; he will do well, Papa. And you, Papa, you will do well, too, to go home and train up young missionaries in the language of the Greenlanders. You need never feel that you are deserting the Greenlanders by leaving them. You will be serving them far better in the homeland, now, than here. You are not strong enough now, Papa, to wrestle with the mountains and the storms and the sea. But you will be strong enough, for many years, to teach others the Greenlander tongue."

"Yes," Hans would sometimes agree, "but it is hard to say farewell to our people here. Perhaps it is best that I go home only for a furlough, then return for a few more years."

Gertrude would always reply, "No, Papa, when we go home we shall *stay* there. That is to be our next field of service."

Nils, the adventurous son, was now assistant to Jacob Severin, a man appointed by the king to oversee the Greenland trade. Hans exulted that Severin was a Christian man and zealous for the propagation of the gospel. As a merchant, he realized that a profitable trade could indirectly be of spiritual value to Greenland.

At the preacher's house, quarters were crowded once more. But now with a happy company. The two young missionaries had brought with them their wives. There was much merriment when Paul and the other Egedes frequently threatened to talk only Greenlandic to the newcomers.

When the natives returned in August and learned of the preacher's plans to go back to the land of the Kablunaks, they were quick to point up their objections:

"There are so few of us left now. There will surely be more than enough seal meat and caribou and fish to feed the preacher and all the people he may call to come to live here. The preacher must never go from us!"

They were not impressed by Hans' reasons for leaving. Since he was not strong enough to journey to their huts, they would come to him. And the preacher's wife, she need not leave her house, they would bring to her anything she desired of them. Indignantly, they objected when Hans reminded them that many of the Greenlanders had given no heed to his message, but had continued in their old heathen ways.

They countered that they were a much more respectable people than they had been before the preacher came to their land. Patiently, Hans explained that it was not only outward obedience in matters of Christian living, not just lip service, that was expected of them, that above all else, their hearts should be completely the Lord's possession.

Well, then, the preacher must stay and make yet more words of understanding about the Lord. He had made many new words for them, words expressing love for one's neighbor, honor to the great God, and peace and good will. Now he must teach them more of how to give their hearts wholly to the Lord, the way Fredrik Christian had done, was not that what he wanted of them?

Long and earnestly, Hans taught them that winter, sometimes sitting with them under their own seal oil lamps to read from the Scripture texts he had translated into their language. And his heart knew the balm of winning more hearts for his Christ. One of them, asking to be baptized, asked also that he might choose his own Christian name.

"Surely," Hans consented, "if there is some name that

especially pleases you, then you may have that name."

"I want to be called Hans," stated the man with proud humility, "because it is the name of the preacher. I want to be like the preacher." And so there was christened a man who later became a catechist and served faithfully for many years at the new mission station established soon after at Frederickshaab.

For Hans, the winter passed pleasantly and happily. Not only was Paul there to preach and to bear the greater of the responsibilities, but the two young missionaries proved so apt at learning the language that by spring they were able to teach the children.

No need to feel any qualms about leaving Greenland; with Paul's strong young hands and earnest spirit, there would be no lagging in the spreading of the gospel throughout Greenland!

Yes, when permission should come from the king by the next ship, he and Gertrude could go home in full peace of mind.

But when in May, the ship arrived, Gertrude was bedridden; this time, she was seriously ill and in great pain. It was with a heavy heart that Hans watched the ship leave Good Hope without him and his beloved wife.

How fervently he prayed that Gertrude would recover yet to see the land of her birth, to go visiting her old friends in Bergen.

Chapter 27

On Christmas Day of 1735, Hans wrote with a trembling hand in his diary:

"It has pleased Almighty God to take from me my beloved wife. If it were not for the comforting hope of a reunion in the Kingdom of Glory, I would scarcely be able to console myself in the face of the loss of such a spiritual and faithful helpmate. As a child of God she bore the cross which was laid upon her with great patience. When she perceived that death was near, she earnestly called upon her God and Redeemer for a merciful deliverance from this vale of tears. After that she had lovingly taken leave of me and the children, God delivered her from her severe sufferings through a blessed death."

But shortly after the first of the year, Hans' remaining energy failed and he collapsed. For weeks his life was despaired of, but by April he was able to stand up again and preach.

Strength was not sufficient for further journeyings to the little clusters of earthen lodges and skin tents. Nor was there need that he should. Day after day, the skin boats on their way to the northlands pulled ashore at

Good Hope and the preacher's brown-skinned friends squatted in the sunshine outside the door where Hans sat in a chair.

They came to bid him farewell, they said. They wanted him to teach them once more of the Lord and His redeeming love. They wanted him to make for them new words of understanding. They wanted him to speak words that would cleave into their hearts like a hunting knife and lay aside the tough skin of their indifference and spiritual laziness.

Day after day, tents were pitched beside the preacher's house. At one time there were more than twenty umiaks beached upon the rocky shores beside Good Hope. They wanted their last instructions from the beloved maker of words. Then they would paddle on to their hunting grounds with the preacher's message cradled in their hearts.

Once again, as in the early years of the mission, provisions became scant when the ship was late in arriving. By the end of May only a small portion of grits remained. There were twenty-six people to feed.

Jubilant welcome awaited Nils when one day he brought home a caribou. The natives were now gone, and they, too, had experienced hunger before they went northward.

Two days before the ship arrived on June 13, Hans sent out men to gather auk eggs from the cliffs of Bird Island.

The ship brought ample provisions for the colony, and official permission from the king for Hans Egede to lay down his work in Greenland. So it was that on August 3, 1736, a small boat pulled out from Good Hope carrying Hans, his two daughters and Nils to the ship anchored in Hope Sea.

On the shore stood a small group waving farewell. A few colonists. The trader and his helpers. The two young missionaries and their wives. Three native catechists. And Paul.

Paul had already established a new mission station far north at Disko Island where the Greenlanders had been spared the pestilence. The people of Kekertarssuak had long desired for themselves a maker of words who could teach them of the Lord God. Now their desire was granted!

Aboard the ship, Hans felt no wish to go at once to his cabin. Not as long as the beloved shores of Greenland, the snow-capped peaks piercing the sky were to be seen! So while the ship started westward down Ameralik Fjord, the preacher stood in the stern and his heart tugged with a host of memories even as the wind tugged at the billowing sails.

Gertrude, beloved Gertrude! Somewhere Up There, *she* was happy, and she had wanted him to go home.

And there was Fredrik Christian. How often he had gladdened his heart with his hunger for the Word! Short had been his months of service, yes, but how much he had accomplished in that brief span. Surely he had hastened by years, the writing of the Greenland grammar and word book, the translation of portions of the Gospels, the writing of the simple catechism.

Albert Top—patient, sincere. Four years of service, yet he had been the one who had finally won Fredrik Christian for the Lord. And that one convert, though dead, still lived in the hearts of many Greenlanders as a worthy example to follow.

Uminguak, boy of promise, scythed by the pestilence. Yet his testimony had not been in vain. There was another

boy now bearing the name of Peter, because he wanted to be like Uminguak, christened Peter.

And Augo, Olabi, Tukajak, Eskias—all of them had been won for the Lord. Years it had taken, but in the end the two-edged sword of God's Word had pierced their hearts and brought them to the feet of the Saviour.

Years of suffering, yes, of hardships that even now made Hans shudder at the memory. Disappointments. Discouragements. The evil influence of the sailors and soldiers, of many of the colonists. The Angakoks. And the pestilence.

Fifteen years, and he had failed to find his Viking countrymen. All that he had discovered were the ruins of the Western Settlement.

The little mission of Good Hope slipped from his sight when, like silver trumpets in a paean of song, phrases from the Bible stirred a glory in his soul:

"And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me . . . And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more."

So had declared the apostle as he left behind him his first mission fields and faced an uncertain future. Prisons and persecutions awaited Paul after Jerusalem, but nothing stemmed his zeal for the Lord's work. Separated from his converts, he yet labored for them, wrote the timeless epistles that were to nurture Christians of all succeeding generations!

In the homeland no Jerusalem of persecution awaited Hans, but opportunity to further the Lord's work he had begun in Greenland.

What was it that Gertrude had said so often?

"It is good that our Paul is here to take your place; he will do well, Papa."

Yes, Paul would do well!

And *he* must try to do as well as his son.

Resolutely, Hans Egede turned his face from the beloved mountains of Greenland.

Epilogue

IN DENMARK, Hans Egede established a seminary for training missionaries to Greenland. He was the head of this school until 1740, when he was made Bishop of Greenland, with headquarters at the Mission College in Copenhagen. He resigned this position in 1747.

He then retired to Norway, where he lived with his elder daughter Kristine. When her husband accepted a parish in Denmark, Hans moved with them there. He died in Denmark in 1758, at the age of 73.

Until the very end he devoted his energies toward the advancement of the Greenland missions, and lived to know that the work he had pioneered was well established and greatly expanded.

Paul Egede remained at his new mission station at Disko, only until he was able to get a resident missionary to take over there. Then he, as his father before him had done, journeyed up and down the coast, from fjord to fjord, preaching the gospel.

In 1740 he returned to Copenhagen, where he became rector at Bartou Hospital, and also a teacher in his father's mission school. In 1761 he was named professor of the Greenlandic tongue; he had translated the New

Testament, rewritten his father's Greenland grammar and also compiled a Greenland-Danish-Latin lexicon. He was made Bishop of Greenland in 1779.

Nils Egede returned to Greenland after three years in Denmark. He worked there as a missionary until 1743, when his health forced him to return to Denmark. Some years later, he was able to make several trips to Greenland on whaling vessels. He gained considerable fame for his skill in whale hunting.

Noteworthy is the fact that not only Egede's children, but many of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren took active part in the furtherance of his work in Greenland. His younger daughter returned there as the wife of a missionary. A number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren went to Greenland either as missionaries or traders.

Hans Egede died believing that the Viking descendants still lived somewhere on the East Coast. His son Paul was able to interest King Frederick VI in sending two ships to explore the area in 1786; in command of one of these ships was Paul's own son. The expedition was unable to penetrate the ice stream. In 1788, Paul Egede wrote in his memoirs that he would take with him to the grave the belief that Viking Norwegians still existed in Greenland. He died the following year.

Ironically enough, Hans Egede actually discovered and explored the full extent of the Viking Settlements. The "Western Settlement" was that situated along Ameralik Fjord where Good Hope was established; the "Eastern Settlement," the Brattahild and Gardar of old Norse sagas, was marked by the old ruins Hans explored in southwest Greenland.

What really happened to the Viking settlers is still a mystery. It is now believed that their disappearance is

due to a combination of circumstances. Doubtless, numbers of them were killed by the natives. When the Black Plague swept Norway in the 15th century, commerce with Europe was broken, the Vikings must have been forced to adopt the Eskimo mode of living and were gradually assimilated by intermarriage. Even before the present common intermarriage of Europeans and Eskimos, there was much evidence in the physical features, the language and the folklore of the natives of southwestern Greenland that the Viking race had been absorbed. The conclusion which Hans Egede drew after seeing the one blond Eskimo is practically the same as that reached by present-day anthropologists.

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* * *

My mother was born on the island lying next to the one on which Hans Egede was born; she attended the same Trondenes church which he had, many years before. Information on Norwegian culture as used in this book are part of my own background. E. N. R.

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